

"THE TORCH IN THE MIST" *by* CONSTANCE SKINNER

# SMITH'S

FEB., 1915

MAGAZINE

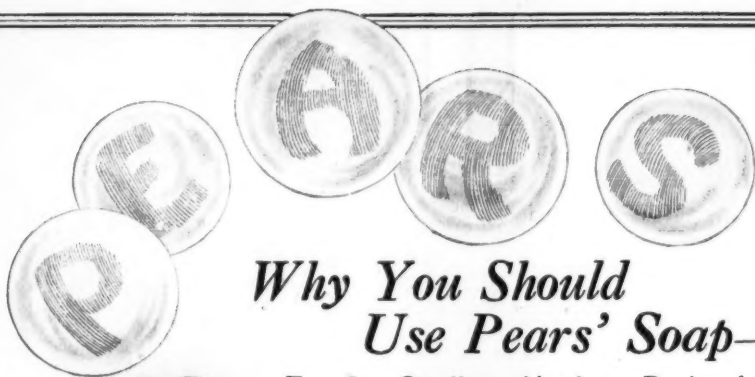
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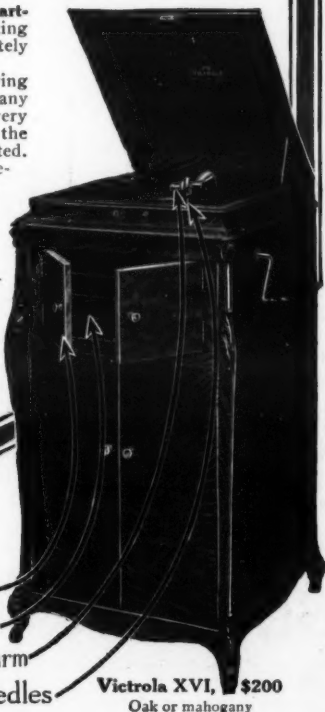
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Vol. XX

No. 5

# SMITH'S MAGAZINE

A PUBLICATION FOR THE HOME

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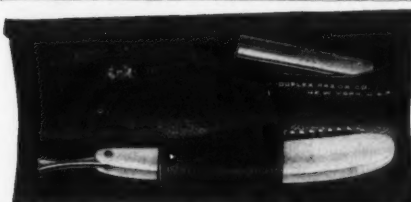
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# SMITH'S MAGAZINE

VOLUME 20

FEBRUARY, 1915

NUMBER 5

## The Torch in the Mist

A TWO-PART STORY—PART I.

By Constance Skinner

Author of "Give Hand and Follow," "A Man and His Mate," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY E. C. CASWELL

**FOREWORD BY THE AUTHOR.** "The Torch in the Mist" is not an attack on progress. It attempts, through the medium of storied characters, to deal with the principle of all progress—including woman's. The principle of progress is spiritual activity. Barbara Lee's tragedy is not uncommon among girls in whom purity is not enlightened by a profound training in the moral facts of life. She has been given no touchstone to show the true from the false. So she passes on from one form of unthinking submission to another, irrationally expecting to find freedom in a different phase of enslavement. Sample is the utterly insincere, commercially-minded, superficially brilliant and magnetic type of man, who is always found hovering about feminine activities. He is the human buzzard, that swoops upon the timid, uncertain going of the weakest little life—which will soonest be meat for him. He is not representative of the earnest workers for eugenics any more than a disease germ is representative of the body. Nevertheless, the pernicious, havoc-sowing ideas he voices are here, to be reckoned with. They lurk in much of the "new" fiction and verse, and are discernible in the utterances of many so-called "advanced" women and men. Cynthia represents the normal and genuine woman soul, which—no matter how victimized and misled—is always seeking right before personal happiness and yearning to give rather than to get; the type that will never let the torch be quenched. Arvidsen is one of the world's master craftsmen, in whom idealism is a working force. He is not my mouthpiece on suffrage. He regards it as such a man must, to whom no one phase of life can be all important because of the vastness of his intellectual and emotional experience in grappling with nature and the world of men.

### CHAPTER I.

ON a showery morning early in May, two women came out of Jansen & Kelly's Emporium on Dane Street, Minneapolis. A limousine, violet-hued and lined in a dove mauve, awaited them. The panes and the mountings of the machine shone crystal clear. There was a silver monogram on the door. The chastely grave "C. L. A." indicated that the limousine was the property of Cynthia Lee Arvidsen, who—as every one in Minnesota knew—was the wife of Ulrick Arvidsen; locally alluded to with pride as "the boy king o' timber."

The elder and shorter of the two women reached the machine first. The chauffeur bent with especial deference as he offered to assist her into the vehicle. On the steps she paused, a sudden dissatisfaction apparent in her whole person. The cause of her pique seemed to be a sprig of lilac, backed by its own green, in the heavy silver bracket vase. She tore it from the holder and threw it into the gutter. Her black eyes were snapping with anger as she turned toward her daughter and said sharply:

"Cynthia, I'm going into Dexter's for some decent flowers!"

Seeing that Mrs. Arvidsen was not at her heels, but still lingering about the window of the Emporium, her temper rose.

"Cynthia! What are you loitering there for? I say I am going down to Dexter's for some flowers I consider fit to hang in that vase I gave you. Don't stand there to be stared at! Get into the car!"

There are women whose habitual conversation is in the phrases of tyranny, to which they do not desire, and seldom receive, reply. Mrs. Cato did not notice whether her daughter answered or obeyed, but set off determinedly for the florist's shop in the next block, her black silk skirts bristling and bustling about her.

Now black silk is a peculiar material. It is the one stuff among a thousand dress goods that has a temperament of its own. It must perforce clothe the body that buys it, but it reserves the right to assert its resentment, or to reveal its sympathy. Women of Mrs. Ledyard Lee Cato's type should never wear it, for it invariably mocks them with imitation. The excellently modeled symbol of aggression that Mrs. Cato called her "figger," and of which she was inordinately proud, expressed personal, independent battle not more distinctly than did her taffetas. They skirted her with guerrilla warfare. Passers-by, idling or busy, instinctly dropped aside and gave her and her petticoats the pavement rights.

Because Cynthia Lee Arvidsen had obeyed her mother all her young life, she moved automatically toward the car. Then, apparently as listlessly, she stopped, hesitated, till, finding herself in the path of the crowd of morning shoppers, she made a conscious move to get out of the way and thus arrived back again at the show window of Jansen & Kelly's.

In the center of the window space was a child's crib. A flaxen-haired doll

reposed among fine linens, downy comforts, and pale-azure silken spreads. In a miniature wardrobe trunk hung little sacques and gowns, wee caps and shoes, and a christening robe. Some were of silk, some of the daintiest linen and lace, all of ineffable loveliness.

On a mat before the crib three larger doll children—two girls and a boy in a sailor suit—sat about a house of blocks raised in a little garden of sand. One daintily dressed doll girl held a bucket and spade. A miniature lawn mower lay close to the boy doll's hand. A tan velvet puppy, of a terrifying ferocity of countenance, reposed on the gingham knees of the other girl doll, who was a hatless, hoydenish ragtag. There were sign cards reading: "Things your Children will Need in the Country," "Sand Tools for the Kids," "Let us Supply your Baby's First Trousseau."

The signs were shoppy and rather jarring. The wide, light eyes of the woman at the window glanced over them absently, and returned to the doll in the crib and its varied wardrobe of tiny garments. The pale eyes were gray in tint and brilliant, and might have been called expressionless because their only look was outward. They were not introspective.

Even in Minneapolis, where society was predisposed to find all gifts in the wife of the "boy king o' timber," Cynthia Lee Arvidsen was not considered a beauty. In her general terms, she resembled too closely a thousand other women. Her height was average, and her form too much so. She had not inherited her mother's conspicuously good outlines. The modesty of veiled maidenhood clung about her. She epitomized refinement, sensitiveness, and the reserve of breeding. Although her hair was a dark enough brown to have made a striking contrast to her large, light eyes, her eyebrows and lashes, being lighter, obscured this effect. Perhaps they would not if her expression

had not seemed to say, "Do not remark me, I am unbeautiful." Her teeth were flawless. Her mouth was beautiful in shape, but only delicately flushed—which prevented general note—ment that the lips were at once soft, flexible, and firm; lips shaped for love, for passion, for deep giving, and for constancy. Her slender throat and chin were unnoticeably perfect. Her movements were graceful and so impersonal that it was easy for her to go through her days at home and abroad unmarked. She dressed with quiet taste, in soft materials. Cynthia's silks were peaceable. None heard them coming or going. Even taffeta ceased to be belligerent when draped from her slender hips. A greater contrast to her mother could not have been devised.

Perhaps Cynthia checked her automatic obedience and returned to the window whither volition led her because this day was like no other in her life. To every soul comes his day of self-questioning, sooner or later. This was Cynthia's.

Hitherto she had accepted unquestioningly the dictum that Deity had written on stone tablets: whatever her mother decreed. Such had been her education from the cradle. She had come into the world a single-hearted and very literal child, endowed with a loyal and affectionate nature. At the portals of life Mrs. Emmeline Ledyard Lee had been waiting to claim her. The restrictive and tyrannical aspects of femininity were marked in Cynthia's mother, and, like the majority of mothers, she considered that complete domination of her child's acts and thoughts was both her duty and her privilege. Cynthia's enslavement had been assured. She adored beauty, and her mother was physically a perfect piece of handiwork. It put a deep, poignant, if silent, woe into Cynthia's literal little heart to know that such wondrous beauty and talent had been sacrificed for her in

painful, mysterious ways since the day of her birth.

Mrs. Cato's conception of herself was a compound of the sentiments current in the romantic fiction of her day, wherein every love was unto death, every ache a torture, and authors glutted themselves and their readers with the sacrifices of tender heroines, who were all "soul," with eighteen-inch waists and a constant recourse to sal volatile. It was the period of romantic speech and commanding gesture. Cynthia's mother's person fitted the stage perfectly.

This living heroine of fiction was of "blue blood." After his service to the Confederacy, her father, old Colonel Ledyard, had taken life as comfortably as possible. He had owned a rambling old house in Josieville, Louisiana—which is on some maps. Without slaves to keep it up, and with both its successive mistresses gone before, it had fallen into disrepair, and weeds and grass choked its garden. The colonel had sat on the veranda, which had needed many a new plank, and had told his young daughters, Emmeline and Paulina, tales of ancestry and gallantry. When he had departed, the daughters had sat on the veranda and read novels; and, according to their separate natures, Paulina—or Polly—had pined and dreamed, and Emmeline had plotted and fumed.

There had entered one Montague Lee, and all the maidens of Josieville had sighed for him. While Polly Ledyard had seemed to be sighing to some purpose, Emmeline had swooped forth and seized him. So Montague Lee had come to sit on the colonel's veranda, sipping and fanning, and fathering Emmeline's three children, Cynthia, Barbara, and Ledyard. The planks had not been nailed nor the grass cut during his tenure. He had died when Cynthia was seven.



*She made a conscious move to get out of the way and thus arrived back again at the show window of Jansen & Kelly's.*

A few years later Alfonzo Cato had sojourned briefly in Josieville, and Emeline Lee had married him. Instead of patching the veranda and cutting the grass, Mr. Cato had abandoned the place, which was unsalable, and had taken his newly acquired family a hundred miles north to La Prière, where he had had a feeble law business. Here he had died when Cynthia was fifteen. He had left almost nothing, and presently

the family had returned to the Ledyard house in Josieville.

Cynthia's mother, first as Mrs. Lee and secondly as Mrs. Cato, had oft descanted upon her indescribable sufferings and disappointments as a wife.

"Never, never leave your mother's side, Cynthia, for the infelicities of married life. Alas, I had no mother to guide me!" Thus she had spoken to six-year-old Cynthia, standing grave-eyed and worshipping at her knee as she had stitched bibs for Baby Ledyard. And later, to the thirteen-year-old Cynthia: "May you never marry, my child! If my children had not demanded the sacrifice, never, never would I have subjected my person a second time to the indignities of wedlock."

Cynthia had felt that it devolved upon her to make good, as it were, the shortage of her father and her stepfather. She had never suspected that the reason why she was treated so much more tyrannically than the other children was because her sad and sensitive imaginings, and her romantic echoings of Mrs. Cato's own high-flown fictions regarding herself, were the meat and drink of a vain, ex-

acting soul. Mrs. Cato had had no intention of being cruel. She abhorred cruelty in any overt fashion. Once, indeed, she had almost blanched the skin of a negro by her lightnings upon him for beating his horse in the streets of La Prière. Such episodes had confirmed Cynthia's faith in the brave tenderness of her mother's heart. She had realized the more poignantly what discipline in her own case must cost

that mother heart, and she had wept many hours in secret over her apparently ineradicable tendency to sin ignorantly.

The only modern and vulgar aspect of Josieville, which otherwise maintained its noble traditions, was the branch sawmill of a Southern lumber company. Ordinarily this sign of plebeian labor would not have concerned the Ledyard descendants. It had happened, however, when Cynthia had been about twenty or a trifle over, that her stepaunt, Miss Ariadne Cato, of La Prière, had departed that city for celestial spheres. Emmeline had turned over her little trunk of bygone garments, had brought out, from its lavender environment, the cataract of crape that had adorned her widowhoods in the earlier and more poignant periods thereof, and had set out for the obsequies.

On the return journey to Josieville, the train had been delayed for hours by a washout. Beautiful Mrs. Cato, swathed in black, her fine eyes plaintively upturned, had appealed mightily to the simple heart of a broad-shouldered, clumsy-looking Norwegian, who had been en route to New Orleans, via Josieville. As she had told Polly afterward, "He fairly encumbered me with costly attentions." Under the gracious sympathy and interest vouchsafed him in return, he had told her all she had desired to know. He was Ulrick Arvidsen, of Minneapolis; he was thirty-three years of age; and he was known as the "boy king o' timber." He was a very busy and a very rich young man, and he was a bachelor.

In return she had told him of the old Ledyard home and its overgrown garden, once the cradle of beauty and valor; of her own life as she saw it—a romantic sacrifice for her children, a perpetual suttee. And lastly she had told him of Cynthia, who was her one perfect reward for everything. Cyn-

thia, she had said, had a spiritual beauty that made mere physical loveliness seem a blasphemy. Cynthia was pure and very innocent; she was the living replica of the Princesse Angèle de Lys de la Roche, an ancestress of the fifteenth century.

Speaking these things in wooing Southern tones, she had seemed to open the door to the country of his dreams; for Ulrick Arvidsen was a peasant with the brain of a business builder, and the heart of a troubadour. He had not heard the tale of Rudel and the Lady of Tripoli; but, like that poet, he had conceived a love for her he had never seen. Arvidsen was of those Scandinavians who never quite lose sound of the singing of the gods. He was a woodsman and a riverman, like his forbears, and his heritage was the pure mysticism of wood and water, as well as the red-hued veins, the rude adamant, and the devastating passions of the clay world.

Beautiful Mrs. Cato had shrewdly offered him the poor remains of the once abundant Ledyard hospitality. He had accompanied her with joy and wonder to lay his homage at the feet of La Princesse Angèle de Lys de la Roche, reincarnated in the gentle and silent Cynthia Lee.

When Mrs. Cato had concluded that it was time he "proposed" for Cynthia's hand, she had taken pity on his bashful sense of unworthiness and had done it for him. In romantic diction, she had informed him that Cynthia's heart was secretly and unalterably his, and that, unless she were loved in return, she would go inevitably into a decline—such being the intense custom of the women of the Ledyard line.

Arvidsen had seemed to see again the crape streamers that had filled him so full of reverence and pity. He had accepted the reincarnated Princesse de Lys de la Roche as a priceless work of art, as a divine favor, hardly as a woman. So high had been his ideal of



her, so unfleshly and impossible the image of her that he had set up—or, rather, that had been set up for him—that he could not see it without, figuratively speaking, straining his eyes and dislocating his neck; but he was content to cling in abasement round the pedestal.

To Cynthia, Mrs. Cato had spoken with less circumlocution. It was Cynthia's duty to marry the timber king and be good to her family. It was her opportunity to sacrifice herself for the benefit of all and thus to return in some slight degree all that she had received from her mother. Cynthia had accepted Arvidsen in a spirit of duty and self-immolation. She had had no love at all for him. He had been alien to her in every way. She had been afraid of him. During the honeymoon she had felt frequently as if she had been deserted on a lone island where a lion seized her and rent her periodically, yet could not kill her because the spirit of sacrifice kept her alive.

Cynthia had dreamed of a romance with some gallant Southerner, of blood to equal her own; an aristocrat with an eagle face and a form slender, fine, and elegant, like the pictures of Alfred in "Lucile." The broad-shouldered Norwegian, unmistakably plebeian for all his good speech and gentle ways, affronted the snobbery that had been implanted in her as an ideal. She knew nothing of life and nothing of real emotion. Arvidsen, being totally unlike Mrs. Cato's rapt depiction of what a husband should be, had been a perpetual shock to Cynthia. At first she had been stoically submissive to him, then apathetically so. Companionship between them never had had an opportunity to develop, for her family still monopolized her. Ulrick was the stranger among them. He was kind and even-tempered always, and very liberal to all of them. They considered that the utmost he could give was little

enough in return for the honor of being allied with the Ledyards and the Lees.

Recently Cynthia had become aware of a change in herself. She found that Ulrick, instead of being a thing to be passively accepted, was actively in her thoughts. On a recent trip to New York, taken ostensibly to see Barbara march in the suffrage parade and prolonged at Mrs. Cato's instigation—it was now Mrs. Cato's worst woe that they could not live in New York—she had missed her husband unendurably. There had been a vague ache in her that could not be cured. Even the return had not appeased it. She experienced loneliness and undefined yearnings. She shed tears whose cause she knew not. She felt her whole being astir and converging toward her husband. She was asking herself what was wrong with her marriage, questioning how full content might come. To-day, looking longingly into the window of Jansen & Kelly's, she seemed to hear the question answered.

## CHAPTER II.

Well-known, peremptory tones called her back from her pleased contemplation of the little garments in the window to the cares that infested Mrs. Cato's day.

"What do you think? Dexter says he asked Mr. Arvidsen if he should send the spring flowers while they lasted, and he said 'yes'! Spring flowers, indeed! As if one couldn't see them rampant like weeds in every back yard in Minneapolis! Why are you standing here for people to jostle and stare at you? And how they *do* stare and jostle in this dreadful town! Little did I imagine that *any* man would bring a woman of refinement and delicacy to such a spot!"

"I was looking at the window and thinking how prettily they had arranged it," Cynthia replied, with partial sincerity.



"Oh, my dear! Think of the windows in New York—Fifth Avenue especially! How I did enjoy the avenue and the more exclusive shops the last time we were there, after Barbara and her dreadful parade were out of the way!" She glanced carelessly at the group of dolls. "But I must say, Cynthia, you're rather rash to stand looking at a lot of baby clothes on the public street in this gossipy town. You know how indelicate Westerners can be. You don't want things like that said about you, I'm sure," she concluded, with verbal vagueness, but clear import. Cynthia followed her into the car silently.

As Mrs. Cato adjusted a spray of orchids in the silver vase with ceremonious touches, the regal signs of her Southern birth were compelling. The magnetism of generations of charm was hers the instant she chose to exert it, even if it were only in so trifling a matter as the arrangement of flowers and a bit of fern in a vase. Her gestures suggested—and not absurdly—a Lely or Reynolds portrait of Flora distilling beauty among her blooms. Even in her much-tyrannized childhood, Cynthia had succumbed most to that potent grace which seemed able to turn an unjust and tempestuous mother with a rod into flashing majesty waving a scepter.

"There, look, Cynthia!" Mrs. Cato's sudden accession of graciousness shone in her lambent regard and her smile. She motioned royally to the chauffeur to proceed.

The man asked of Cynthia: "Where to, Mrs. Arvidsen?"

"I think I'd like to drive through the park. The flower beds are wonderful now. Then, Murray, you may take us home through Lindholm Street."

"Ah-h! Always the loving wife—that, first!" her mother cried with a charming air of banter, which even invited the chauffeur to come out of his menial station and be a part of her

court for the moment—an invitation that he ignored with a stolid sense of knowing his place, and, it may have been, with caution born of knowing Mrs. Cato.

"Shall I stop at the office, madame?"

"Yes. Perhaps we'll be able to take Mr. Arvidsen home to lunch."

"I heartily approve of that little touch of wifeliness before servants and society, my dear," Mrs. Cato commented, settling herself comfortably. "It's very pretty and becoming in a young woman. It was always my own public manner to your father, no matter what our private differences might have been. And it must be owned that he knew how to receive it—which I doubt if our poor dear Ulrick does." She laughed; it was a ripple of condescension. "Your father was a *Lee*. Ah, yes"—she sighed—"a *Lee*! And when you have said *that*, you've said the whole of him! He hadn't initiative enough to hunt beetles with a butterfly net like his Cousin Alfred. *Such* manners, though! But deceptive, which is a flaw in the character of many truly elegant men.

"You know he would probably have married your Aunt Polly, and made a fool of her, if I hadn't taken right hold of things and prevented it. Polly was always silly about men. She thought every man who looked at her was in love with her. It was just the same when Alfonso Cato began coming to the house. I can tell you, it took all my wits to prevent a tragedy there, too. Ah, well, child, this sounds only like an oft-told tale to you, I know. You little know how your mother has struggled and schemed and suffered for her children's sakes—for you and Barbara and Ledyard." She readjusted her handsome seal-and-ermine scarf, the gift of her son-in-law.

"Yes, indeed, I do know, mother. You've so often told me." Cynthia spoke gravely, and as if even this slight

breaking of her habitual reserve was an effort. "Besides, I think of it very often. I remember, when I was quite a little child, how I used to think that you were like all those heroes of your family in the war—a different heroism, but just as noble. The only way I could try to imitate you was not to cry when I was punished. Even when I couldn't see what I had done to be so severely dealt with, I always thought that you had seen something in me that might not have mattered in any one else, but that was unworthy of a Ledyard and a Lee."

"Several times, Cynthia, you tried to develop self-will. Of course, I could not tolerate *that*! You may be thankful that *your* mother was never too tired or too sentimental to discipline her own children. I'd like to see some of these silly, common, soft women of to-day suddenly set up at the head of a great Southern household, with a score of slaves to keep in order, as my mother was! A pretty mess they'd make of it! A woman's ability to rule and discipline is a test of her blood."

"Is that a new argument for suffrage, mother?" Cynthia laughed.

"Oh, suffrage! I've no patience with the women! Relinquishing their privileges to get their rights, and no wits to see they're taking the spice out of life for themselves! Show me the man I can't handle, even at my age!" Her low laugh was a satisfied pur. "I can't imagine what has got into the women! They'll ruin the men, you know. Men have always been ruled by women. Take away that control by putting women on a basis of equality with men, and the result will be demoralized and degenerate men. The women of to-day, my dear—if you'll permit your old mother to speak bluntly—have too little sex and too much conversation."

"Why, mother! I never heard you say *that* before," Cynthia exclaimed.

"I thought you approved of woman suffrage. You let Barbara go in for it."

"Let her, indeed! I *made* her go in for it!" Again she emitted the triumphant pur that expressed her amused self-satisfaction. "Dear, dear! Did I never tell you about that? Fancy! And of course Barbara wouldn't. She's such a queer, sullen child. It was while you were on your honeymoon. I had done so well for you in marrying you to Arvidsen, who is really a dear fellow, despite his common birth. You know, at first I felt that he could never be anything more to me personally than your provider, but now I have *quite* accepted him as a son."

"He's the provider for all of us." Cynthia's tone suggested that she had pondered this point.

"Well, just look at the wife I gave him! He owes me something for that." She laughed charmingly, and patted her daughter's hand. "But I was telling you about Barbara. When she came home from Miss Floutby's, I fell into despair. How I had scrimped and contrived to keep her there! And after all the expense! But it seems that select boarding schools can do only so much, after all. They couldn't make a beauty of Barbara. No, I had to face Barbara as she was; 'Nothing daunted'—the motto of the Ledyards, my dear.

"Well, I lay awake nights trying to think how to turn her to her own best advantage. Then one morning in the paper—just as if by chance, but really it was in answer to a despairing mother's prayer—I saw the pictures of two Englishwomen, who had been arrested for pasting 'Votes for Women' on the headstones in a London churchyard. I noticed that both of them had quite a look of Barbara, and I said so to Polly. Then, in the Sunday paper, there was a page about them, and pictures of some New York suffragists



"Why, there's Barbara!" she said. "Who is the man with her?"

who were going to get up a parade, with charades in the evening. And really they all had a look of Barbara. It was something in the expression chiefly, though several of them had her long face and big features—*no figures*, of course." She smoothed her own bosom contentedly. "I saw exactly what is behind all this movement. It's the last hope of the ugly woman, Cynthia; a method of achieving excitements otherwise denied to her."

"Oh, do you think so? Barbara says the women have wrongs that should be redressed. Besides they aren't *all* ugly, mother."

"Piffle! Haven't women *always* had wrongs? Yes, indeed! And haven't they made the men suffer for them, too? That's part of our hold on men. As to beauty—well, it's not what it was in *my* day! Looking at those pictures, I saw that Barbara—so hopeless as a

social figure—was the perfect suffrage type. For one thing she *looks* athletic. Of course, she *isn't*—Barbara's lazy. But with her long arms and her flat hips and that stride—why, she's simply *made* for marching in parades.

"I had the matter all arranged and was discussing it with Polly—who, of course, perfectly agreed with me—when Barbara came in. I told her what I had decided, and I'll never forget how she opened her big eyes at me. Barbara's eyes are very good—her only good point, poor child!"

"Ulrick says Barbara's eyes are beautiful," Cynthia interrupted. "He says they make him think of evening on Twin Lakes in Wisconsin. I've always liked him for saying that," she concluded meditatively.

"Oh, how *very* pretty!" Mrs. Cato's dulcet tones purred flattery and condescending charm.

Herein, perhaps, lay the secret of her power over those in her environment—that, from the most tyrannical and shrewish mood, she could turn instantly into the melting, shining smile of regal favor. Her lightly, and unexpectedly, purred “Oh, how very pretty!” made Cynthia thrill with pride for Ulrick; but she knew her parent, so she said nothing. Mrs. Cato took up her recital of her youngest daughter’s graduation into the cause of female liberties.

“Well, Barbara looked at me, and she said—what do you suppose? The child actually told me that she had heard some one lecture against it at Miss Floutby’s and that *she didn’t believe in it!*”

“She didn’t! Why?” There was more than surprise in Cynthia’s voice, though her mother did not discern it.

“Why, indeed! Do you suppose I asked her? I was so taken aback for the moment that I did nothing. Then, when I realized what she had actually said to me, I became so furious that I boxed her ears roundly.” Her low, melodious laugh rippled out. “Barbara looked perfectly terrified. I can laugh at it now, but at the time I fear I was simply beside myself. It’s the Ledyard temper. But, indeed, Polly was almost as angry as I was. The idea of that child having convictions, if you please, against suffrage, when it was positively the only thing for her!”

“I can tell you, when I had concluded my argument on the woman question, Barbara was meek enough and willing to vote for anything—or to march for the ‘vote or ride a donkey to get it—or whatever they think they’re doing—the idiots!” She laughed derisively.

Cynthia was silent. They had turned into the park now by her favorite road. She leaned out slightly and let the fragrance from a quarter of a mile of lilacs envelop her. The sod was

the glad canary green of spring. The light was an exultant burst of joy, as earth, after her long, fallow season, leaped to the coming of her overlord with the white winds of creation in his vestments and the sapphire of calm potency on his brow.

Cynthia’s pale-gray eyes reflected the shining of earth and air in a topaz gleam, her slender, formless body seemed to thrill imperceptibly; as a young tree that feels its sap. It was the quiver of expression rather than a physical motion. She was as wordlessly alive, as passionate and unsexual as the spring. It was as if she had abnegated self and opened to law that she might be a harmonious receptacle for the light and loveliness of the monolife of the sphere. She was beautiful in that moment; but there was none to see, save the spring which made her so. No man could have perceived her loveliness save one in whom earth’s own dream had won a point beyond desire.

“What fragrance!” she said softly. “Oh, mother, just drink a cupful of that lilac-scented light! It’s wonderful!”

“M’fff, m’fff!” Mrs. Cato sniffed politely. “How charming! By the way, Cynthia, that reminds me. You’ve been married three years this spring. This is the dangerous time—when a husband begins to take things for granted and his gifts incline to economy. I realized, the moment I saw that bit of lilac in the vase, that Ulrick Arvidsen had reached the place where he thought that *my daughter* belonged to him. It made me indignant. Cheap flowers, darling, may very easily prove the entering wedge. Your mother has had a great deal of life’s experience—with two husbands. In protecting myself, as well as your foolish aunt, I learned a good many things that are useful in a crisis.

“Now if Ulrick had remained in his

own station and married some Katrina in a red flannel petticoat—" She shrugged delicately. "But he married *my* daughter and the daughter of a Lee, and he can *never* do enough to compensate her for having stooped to a mere peasant—for that is all he is, for *all* his money! Keep him at arm's length and always make him realize the distance between you. Indeed, all men are peasants to their wives. They have none of that fine art of reserve in intimacy which every woman possesses naturally. Men have *no* spirituality—and a good job, too! For if they had, I don't know how we should manage them. Whereas, as it is, it's a comparatively simple matter. A girl as well instructed as you have been will have no trouble in keeping her husband."

"You're positive of that, mother? Sometimes—I begin to be afraid when I think that I know absolutely nothing of life but what you have taught me, and when I realize that something in me—my own instinct, I suppose—is at variance with that teaching—" She left the sentence uncompleted.

"If you hadn't had your mother to guide you, you'd probably have begun the second year of your marriage wearing alpaca gowns and cotton stockings! Further, my dear, it doesn't suit me to hear you talk of your 'instincts'! No doubt you've picked that up from Ulrick. It is a man's word—a husband's word, I might almost say, and his precious self-justification for everything that a lady resents! No doubt Ulrick's mother has instincts. I can see her in my imagination—a big, shapeless mass of peasant clay, carrying a laundry basket on her head six days in the week, before Ulrick made his money. And more than likely her log-hauling husband beat her with the wagon traces—"

"Oh, mother! How can you—"

"Yes, yes, I'm sure of it," Mrs. Cato flowed on, scornful reproach and inter-

ruption. "Then they fell into each other's arms and wept. That's how people who have 'instincts' behave. Common things! But you are a Ledyard and a Lee and a *lady*. The women of the Ledyards and the Lees don't have 'instincts,' Cynthia! They have *traditions*!"

The wife of the "boy king o' timber" turned her colorless, brilliant eyes full upon her mother. An indefinable expression darkened them and instantly fled, like the quiver of a bird's wing through a pool of still morning air.

"Mother, don't you realize that I am now a woman of the Arvidsens?"

"Cynthia!"

"And when I have a child, if it is a daughter, she will be a woman of the Arvidsens—and if a son—"

She got no farther, for the vials of her mother's wrath overflowed.

"It isn't necessary for you to have children, is it?" she flamed. "Do you want to kill your mother? My blood freezes at the thought of it. Do I look like *any* child's grandmother—much less *that Swede's child's*! Oh, you sicken me! I *never* wanted to see you with babies. Didn't I have three? Don't I know? Spoiling your figure and making a prisoner of you! You had to marry Arvidsen for all our sakes. We were at the end of things when he dropped in. But I never meant you to bear his children. *That* I couldn't endure. I *wouldn't* suffer it!"

"Mother—mother—I don't understand you! You don't know what you're saying. You frighten me!" Cynthia shrank back from the blazing creature beside her.

Mrs. Cato seized her arm fiercely, boring her fingers into the flesh, and pulled her around till she could search her pale, troubled face.

"Cynthia Lee, tell me the truth! You were staring at that window. Are you— Don't dare to hide it from me!"



Cynthia tried to free her arm.

"Speak, I tell you!" Mrs. Cato commanded.

"No, I can't say I have positive reason to hope that," Mrs. Arvidsen replied after a moment. "But I am sure it will be—because I want it so much. It's true, all you say about why I married Ulrick. Knowing how you had suffered and struggled for us always, I'd have said 'yes' to him if he'd been a hunchback instead of so big and powerful he made me afraid. I knew my feelings didn't matter at all, so I married him. But I've changed, though you haven't noticed it. I—I—" Her pale face blanched still whiter with the feeling that now forced its way to the surface, and with the shock she was dealing her own strange, secret nature in speaking. "Ulrick has come to be everything to me. Everywhere I look I seem to see him standing. When others are speaking, I hear him. I think of him all the time. I know that if it would benefit him, or even please him, I would let him drive over me in that great car of his and make dust of me. I don't know whether it's love or not. It isn't what I've read in romances and poems. It's—it's—possession. Just that. It couldn't be written in a book. But ever since I've felt it, I've had this hope—"

"If that day ever comes, it will kill your mother! Do you think I'll live to be put on an equal basis with that strapping peasant woman with her laundry baskets? Have you no gratitude when you think how carefully I've protected you from contact with her? At first he was bent on forcing the acquaintance, but I made him see the impossibility of it. And now— The two grandmothers of his son—"

She burst into tears. She was not a tearful woman. Cynthia had not seen her mother weep more than twice in her life. She had met her widowhoods dry-eyed. This sudden over-

whelming flood of grief aroused such consternation in Cynthia that all else was forgotten in a resumption of filial tenderness.

"There—dear!" she soothed. "You wonderful, beautiful mother! How hard it must have been for you to have just ordinary, everyday children! You ought to have had daughters like the fairies in Andersen's tales, and married them to reigning princes."

"I—I—might have done so much—if—I—if I'd only had a chance. Now—now—if you go and—make me a-a-a—grandmother! Oh-h—that will be the last straw!"

"There—there, mother, darling!" Then she added craftily: "You know we may bring Ulrick home with us, and you mustn't be tear-stained. Ulrick says that every time he sees you you look handsomer than the last time."

"Oh—oh—indeed! Does he? As if I ca—cared for Ulrick's opinions!" Mrs. Cato jeered feebly through her final sobs.

However, she dabbed her face with her gold-mounted powder puff and re-adjusted her hat and veil to a nicety—and then turned upon her daughter a look of magnificent hauteur that forbade her to take note of the action.

"Well, are we going to spend the whole day loitering in this park like a couple of plebeians who have never seen flower beds before?"

"Would you like to go home now, dearest?"

"Yes, I most decidedly *should*! My head's splitting, and I want my lunch."

Cynthia gave the order.

### CHAPTER III.

As she leaned forward to do so, she espied two saunterers among the flowering bushes. Their ponies were tied to a stump on the bridle path a few yards away.

"Why, there's Barbara!" she said. "Who is the man with her?"



"Man! Barbara with a man?" Mrs. Cato was all excitement. "Why, so it is! Call her here instantly!"

The girl had already recognized the machine, and now came toward it, her companion following. Barbara Lee was all that her mother's graphic word painting had indicated. She was unduly tall and angular, and there was no suggestion of Mrs. Cato's grace in her walk. Physically, like her sister, she was a reversion to an earlier type, when a pioneer strain of less elegance must have crossed with the Ledyards or the Lees.

Her face and neck were long and narrow and dusky in tint. Her mouth was very small, but not arched in the bow of beauty, and, placed as it was a trifle obliquely between a large, unstraight nose and a somewhat too long chin, it gave a weak, even trivial, look to her face. The stamp of vacillation ceased to be annoying and became pitiful when the brow and eyes were studied in their relation to the whole. The forehead was prettily shaped under soft bands of blue-black hair which lay low upon it. The eyes were very large and almost as black as the hair and the perfect eyebrows. Ulrick Arvidsen might well liken them to lakes at dusk; not only for their dark depths, which were not lustrous at all but softly dull and bottomless like evening waters, but because of a pristine ignorance, a gentle unknowingness and incomprehension such as field-girded pools may have, who feel life and the touch of man all around them and upon their surface—yes, and in their depths—yet comprehend nothing of all the process. Such eyes are seen alike in the very innocent and the unmoral; they are the eyes of those who have never understood the urge of life that moves them.

There was pathos in the picture of Barbara Lee as she came striding, not manfully, but with awkward assertiveness, through the hawthorn and lilacs,

a flush on her face, her weak mouth shaping to an innocent, greeting smile, her wide, uncomprehending eyes looking abroad with indiscriminate welcome under her pretty, girlish brow, which was fashioned for the protective kiss and the simple benediction of home.

Her companion was a thin man of medium height or less. His face was noticeable chiefly for a high, rather narrow, forehead inclined to peak under his light hair, which was long and soft, if not overly abundant. His nose was a short specimen of the "military beak"; one of those nasal appendages that seem to have been planned in advance for the pince-nez and which, thus provided, give forth somewhat the same air of exclusiveness as milady's lorgnette. A sparse but long, pale-gold mustache hid his mouth. His light-brown eyes peered gnomishly through his glasses, while his face was mobile with a smiling expression, evidently habitual, as if he would say: "Here am I, ready to be pleased with you, whoever you may be."

He swept off his cap and came forward, still holding Barbara's arm loosely with his finger tips, and beamed brightly at the two women in the machine. Cynthia was about to greet her sister, but Mrs. Cato was first.

"Why, Barbara! Why, my dear child!" she purred velvety. "Imagine running across you like this! How *delightful*! Cynthia, dearest, isn't it *charming*?"

It is more than probable that she did not know in the least what she was saying; but one thing she did know positively and that thing was that she was showing her daughter's masculine companion that Barbara Lee's mother was a lady of a beauty and charm unequaled in his experience.

"Good morning, mother! Mother, this is Mr. Sample. You know—Harmon Partridge Sample, who writes all



"Sit dow', laddy. Hittitauka go make cread soup—cel'ry cread soup."

those wonderful articles in the *Globe*! He lectures on eugenics, too."

Mrs. Cato extended her hand graciously to the enveloping, yet nicely deferential, grasp of the writer.

"Barbara's mother! I'd have known it! You're alike—yes. Yet so unlike! Well, we live in an age of paradoxes. But what an introduction your daughter has given me! 'Harmon Partridge Sample, who writes all those wonderful articles in the *Globe* and lectures on eugenics!' Tut, tut! So elaborate

an introduction, yet so incomplete. Allow me to finish by saying that I not only write for the *Evening Globe*, but for *Ding-dong*, that quaint little weekly, and for the Dyer Syndicate of newspapers, and am likewise the author of two pamphlets, one entitled 'The Futurism of Women'—which means more than her mere future, let me tell you—the other 'The Portraiture of Moods.' And also have I written a book called 'Hours With My Imagination.' And I add, if you have not read them, why

not?" He laughed in peals. He suggested a carefree, overgrown boy, who existed only in the enthusiasm of the moment. He still held Mrs. Cato's hand. "There, sweet lady! Since I am to be thus advertised on the roads of spring, let us do it completely."

"You delightful man! I shall order them all immediately. I'm sure they're charming. You must autograph them for me."

Both her daughters saw by her purring coquetry that Mrs. Cato was enraptured with Mr. Harmon Partridge Sample. Barbara's slightly revealed apprehension fled. A shy pleasure crept into her face.

"Now, Mr. Sample, do let me introduce you to my other little girl. Cynthia, dear—Mrs. Arvidsen, Mr. Sample. The wife of Ulrick Arvidsen." She gave a little laugh. "I'm sure you can't have spent a day in Minneapolis without hearing of him."

"The 'boy king o' timber!'" He had seized Cynthia's slender little hand now in his brotherly clasp. "What a wonderful creature he must be! My little comrade, here, has half promised me an introduction. You see, Mrs. Arvidsen, although I have written my views on monarchy, including a post-impressionistic review of George's coronation, yet I've never met any kings personally—or vikings. And what I learn from our imaginative, poetical Barbara leads me to the inevitable conclusion that Ulrick Arvidsen is the logical descendant of Ibsen's own Haakon Haakonson."

As neither of the girls had read "The Pretenders," they both smiled a constrained assent, and said nothing.

"Indeed he is! The logical descendant of Ibsen's own— How perfectly you express our dear Ulrick! Doesn't he, Cynthia? That's what I so often say."

Mrs. Cato had not read Ibsen either, but she was not so easily nonplused as her offspring. Mr. Sample was sur-

veying Cynthia with intimate, pleased analysis through his large, round disks, his head on one side.

"Ah, now I have found a stranger in your family, Barbara. Your sister—whence is *she*? How did she come among you dusky, sloe-eyed women, with her crystal glance? Will you let me sketch you? Oh, I do a little of that, too. Purely impressionistic. I have two studies of Barbara that we are very pleased with—and very vain of—aren't we, comrade?"

"Indeed!" Mrs. Cato said. "And why haven't I been told of them?"

Barbara blushed as she answered: "Of course, you see, mother, they aren't portraits of me. I mean, they're not meant to look like me. They're just studies. Mr. Sample doesn't let people see his work—that is—" She floundered to silence. He looked at her laughingly. Evidently her young, bashful stammerings were an enjoyment to him.

"Not *people*, no. But Barbara's mother is something very different. Come to lunch with me—now—all of you!" he burst out suddenly. "Yes, yes! I'll take no denial. Hittitsuka, my almond-eyed Oriental, is that treasure of a cook to whom I say: 'Luncheon for two to-day at one, O son of Nippon!' He answers, 'Ver' gud, master!' At two o'clock precisely, if not later, he brings forth a dinner for six. Oh, ample and generous Hittitsuka! He reads such largeness of hospitality into my New England-bred soul that I must perforce strive for it! Therefore, come to luncheon—eat marvels of misapplied Japanese art—and behold how and to what end I have studied Barbara. What say you, lovely lady? Yes—yes—yes—it is, eh?"

"You very impertinent boy! I should refuse *icily*. But I've always said that the only man I couldn't conquer was an impertinent man."

"I repent nothing, madam, since my

impudence gives me your lovely presence and that of your crystal-eyed daughter, the queen of timber. The address is two-forty-three Minnetwa Street. Let this gasoline lyricist, alias chauffeur, convey you to my chaste retreat forthwith. Barbara and I will canter thither. If you arrive first, which is likely, anticipate my welcome; and moderate the transports of Hittitsuka, who dotes on company. Au revoir, ladies."

"Really, Cynthia, I'm so amazed—and amused," Mrs. Cato informed her eldest born as she leaned forward to watch Mr. Sample and Barbara running down the path to the hitching post. "Fancy Barbara—and I never saw her look plainer—fancy Barbara attaching a brilliant, intellectual, *noted* man like that! That's what comes of her woman's movement. I *felt* it was her chance, though I never could have foreseen this. But we are led, Cynthia; we are led. I believe absolutely in the machinations of Providence. He may even marry her. Dear, dear! How thankful you girls ought to be to your mother, who has foreseen and outlined every development in your lives!"

"Yes, mother. Things do work out wonderfully the way you plan them. And of course Barbara's will be a love match, if it happens. I wish we had told Ulrick that I was not marrying him for love. It would have been *honest* and—"

"Cynthia Lee!" Mrs. Cato's sense of propriety was really affronted. "What an indelicate idea! Ulrick would have been almost justified in breaking off the engagement. I hoped I had at least brought you up a gentlewoman."

#### CHAPTER IV.

The limousine reached 243 Minnetwa Street before the ponies. In answer to a prolonged bell ringing, the door was opened by a squat, thick little party in

an immaculate dark-green suit and a hard hat. In his arms he carried several paper bags from which lettuce leaves and celery tops waved. It was Hittitsuka, just returned from marketing. He bowed and smiled and bowed and backed, and the celery tops waved and bobbed.

"Cub in, laddy. How do? Cub in, ludch compady. Hittitsuka ver' glad—Hittitsuka fro' Japan. Now cub fro' market. Master say ludch be for two one 'clock. I say yes. But now cad-dot be. Clock say one-t'rdy, so ludch one 'clock caddot be."

He was gently deprecating, welcoming, firm and joyous all in one. He spun ahead of them into a room where many pastel shades, astonishingly blended, projected an atmosphere like colored haze. A motto hung conspicuously, declaring: "Here we speak frank speech." Hittitsuka motioned to the silk-cushioned chairs.

"Sit dow', laddy. Hittitsuka go make cread soup—cel'ry cread soup; fish Japan; grepfroid salub; liddle lab chop. Pink icy. Hittitsuka go mek all for compady ludch, laddy. Goo'-by."

He spun away like a top, salaaming and curvetting on his high heels, the green stuffs waving over his shoulders.

"This room makes me think of a cobweb in the sun, with that tinted stuff on the panes," Cynthia remarked. "What an odd idea not to want to see out!"

"I can't say I'm partial to it," her mother replied. "But of course it's very artistic." She was surveying in a puzzled fashion an oil sketch on an easel. "Cynthia, come here! Perhaps you can make out what this thing is."

Cynthia studied it for some moments, then she said:

"I wonder if it's one of his pictures of Barbara. You know she said they weren't made to look like her. But, see, if you follow the queer, square lines *this* way, they do make a sort

of woman with floods of black hair. The hair is these lines here. Yes; and there are the eyes—those big black spots."

"Well, how the painter's art has changed, since Polly and I were taught to do flowers in water colors! Why on earth has he painted Barbara in such a pose—straining her back climbing over a heap of knobs? Is it a stairway? It looks like everything flung out of a seven-story apartment house in a fire. And what's that red stuff spotting all over her? She looks half murdered, poor child!"

Cynthia, who had picked up a piece of paper, scribbled in pencil, answered from superior knowledge:

"Those are poppies. Listen:

"O Barbara Lee,  
You have come to me  
In your lightless maiden morning,  
The poppies—"

"No; that is erased. Oh, here:

"The warm blooms of sleep,  
Round your cool form weep,  
Your eyes hint nought of the dawning.  
O Barbara Lee,  
Came you knowless to me,  
Deaf to the cosmic warning?"

"Well!" Mrs. Cato ejaculated when she could get her breath. "Of course it's very clever—oh, *very clever*. But do you think it's quite *delicate*? How manners have changed! Now, when I was a girl, such a verse would not have been considered good manners."

"Mother, do you think it's right for Barbara to be so intimate with some one you don't know?"

"I suppose we must concede these liberties to active workers in those women movements and not be narrow, as people have to be who keep solely to the way of good society. What would be shocking and vulgar in you would be all right for Barbara. But really such verses and such painting—I think *decidedly* he should wait until he has a husband's right. I shall question Barbara closely."

"Mother"—Cynthia's tone was mutinous—"Barbara is my sister and we are just two women. And what is wrong for one is wrong for the other."

"Cynthia, you're excessively irritating this morning. Besides, you're entirely ignorant on these matters and should be silent about them."

"Yes, I am ignorant; I have found that out. The only thing I know is how to spend Ulrick's money. I wonder when he found me out. Of course he *has* found me out!"

## CHAPTER V.

"Who has found you out, Cynthia?"

Cynthia turned with a gasp. For once Mrs. Cato was too surprised to speak. Hittitsuka was bowing and pirouetting about a big, shaggy man who stood in the partly veiled doorway. The newcomer was not tall. He would have been a little over medium height if he had held his head erect, which he did not. His was a large head, of the type generally described as "leonine." He carried it forward, his neck sunk between his shoulders. His hair was black and abundant, and waved with rather an uncombed look across a broad, low forehead. Under heavy eyebrows, a most unusual pair of violet-blue eyes looked forth with searching brilliance, softened by long lashes.

Everything about Arvidsen spoke of *intelligent* energy. His great shoulders seemed to testify to great burdens conquered in the bearing, and to his notable enterprises carried to success. The ease of his big frame and his demeanor breathed of strength in harmony. A mind, far-seeing, logical, constructive, and analytical, looked out from the direct, peaceful, glowing eyes. Here, one would say, is a man of large aims, of determination, of kindness; a man of deep feelings, deep needs; a man of primitive passions with the excep-



tional analytical faculty to comprehend them; but a man to be thus easily read only as a type, never in the specific instance. Probably in all his business and personal acquaintanceship there was no man who would venture to say in advance what Ulrick Arvidsen would do in a given situation. It was this impenetrability of the man, just realized by his wife, that had helped to awaken her, in the spring of her third married year, from a comfortable lethargy into doubts and fears.

"Ulrick! What are *you* doing here?" she queried, showing her astonishment, but not the deeper tremor that was saying in her: "He knows people and goes to places *you*, his wife, know nothing of."

"Barbara phoned that you wanted me. It seemed to be urgent, so I came. She was riding with this Mr. Sample and met you— Then the phone blinked and I didn't get all the rest of it. Are you ill?"

Before Cynthia could reply, her mother did it for her.

"Oh, no! I see it all. Barbara had promised Mr. Sample to introduce you. He had heard so much about you, of course. So I suppose she said Cynthia wanted you, just to get you here."

"I see." He was looking at his wife. "Then you didn't want me at all?"

"Yes, I did; but I didn't know it," she answered quickly, flushing. He smiled slightly.

"Then I'm glad I came, though I've got my hands full at the office to-day." He turned to the ingratiating Hittitsuka, who was still circling about him with phrases of welcome in which most of the consonants were d's. A look of genial humor softened his rather heavy features. "That will do, friend. I'm glad you're glad. Now let me remind you that the soup's burning—or the back-door bell is ringing." Hittitsuka stared and missed one or two bows, his mouth opened. "Whichever will

put you in the kitchen quickest," Arvidsen added. Hittitsuka emitted a sibilant sputter, and fled to his domain.

"I suppose he keeps the Samurai to dust the Satsuma," Arvidsen remarked, coming into the room. "'Here we speak frank speech,' eh?" His glance had been caught by Mr. Sample's conspicuous motto. "Ledyard's coming, too. Your brother is going to be all right after a bit, Cynthia. He's getting so that he likes to work. He adds rapidly and never gets anything wrong but the answer."

Mrs. Cato shuddered inwardly.

"You might say good morning to me, Ulrick," she said rather tartly. Ulrick's lack of manners was one of her crosses.

"If I did, I'd be foolish, because it isn't morning. However, I'll say, 'Good afternoon, mother-in-law!' You're looking handsomer than usual—if that's possible."

"And please don't call me 'mother-in-law' before Mr. Sample. You know it's not considered the correct form of address."

"I know you're too young for it. 'Sweetheart' is what any man who sees you naturally wants to call you. Only Cynthia might be jealous."

It was genially and gently said, but is was unmistakably the witticism of a plebeian. Arvidsen either would not, or could not, allow people to mistake him for a gentleman born.

It was only recently that Cynthia had noticed how constantly his eyes dwelt on her and how impersonal was their gaze. To-day the fact impressed her particularly. He seemed to look at her, and through her, but never into her. She thought with a little pang of fear: "I might be a specially designed window in his house. He approves of my appearance and looks through and beyond for a view." She said aloud:

"We were coming for you to take you home to lunch when we met Bar-

bara." She had wanted to say, "I was coming," instead of "we," but both her mother's training of her as a wife and her mother's presence restrained her.

"Yes," Mrs. Cato put in. "I said to Cynthia, 'Let's go for Ulrick and bring the poor boy home to lunch!' You see we don't forget you."

"Going for Ulrick is one of the best things you do, mother-in-law," was his pleasant reply. "You might not have got me this time, because I'm busier to-day than any other six men I know. If Barbara hadn't been so glib with her fibs, I'd likely now be setting a few corporation lawyers at each other's throats while I was scooting off to Mandalek to convince Berthe and Rigel that Little Swede River is all my little river when I want to get my logs out." He walked to the easel. "Hello, what's this? A picture of the nightmare that kept Lady Macbeth walking?" He picked up the poem and spent some time perusing it in relation to the picture.

Cynthia felt a keen disappointment. She turned away to hide the trembling of her lip. Her small, tentative effort to come into closer sympathy with her husband had failed, and through interference. Of course her mother had meant nothing ill, but at least she had been lacking in tact to intrude her polite lie at that moment. She had made Ulrick think it was she, and not his wife, who had suggested coming for him. As for Mrs. Cato herself, she was quite ignorant of the little stir of resentment she had roused in her daughter. Her remark had had no specific, immediate motive. It was Mrs. Cato's instinct and nature to claim herself as the inspiration of all action in her environment.

The noise of their host's arrival with Barbara put the two women on the alert. Mrs. Cato moved toward the door, and Cynthia followed, obeying automatically her mother's beckoning

gesture. Arvidsen continued to regard the picture. Unobserved, he slipped the verses into his pocketbook.

"I waited on the steps because I saw your nags laboring along far down the street," Ledyard Lee was saying. "Horses are swell for looks, Babs; but for *getting there* I recommend a taxi. Hello, Ulrick. I charged the taxi up to you. I can't afford 'em on my salary. Good afternoon, mater. Got yourself up most especially stunning to do this little bit of bohemia, didn't you?" He kissed her hand grandiosely. "How do, Mrs. Arvidsen? A pleasure to lunch with you."

Having completed his greetings in a manner that hinted oddly of old-time gallantry through the irreverent speech of 1913, he took a survey of the apartment, leaving the women to pour out their compliments to Mr. Sample on his original scheme of decoration. Ledyard, a slim lad, about to celebrate his majority, would have been the image of his mother but for a pair of gray eyes that almost matched Cynthia's—all but the dash of blue in them.

"A nice yarn you told me, sister!" Ulrick said, tapping Barbara on the arm. She swung around to him and hung on his shoulder.

"I know I did, old top," she answered impudently. "But I couldn't get you any other way—small compliment to me!" He smiled at her. "Oh, I'm not a beauty like mother, or a chaste bit of elegance like Cynthia, but I've got eyes! You might have said 'yes' for my eyes, Ulrick. They're better than Cynthia's," she concluded audaciously.

His glance interrogated and weighed her. She tossed her head; her look was something more than arch, and markedly out of keeping with the natural expression of her face in repose. She continued:

"You know, you old poke, you're not my brother really—any more than you

are Cynthia's. And after you and she are divorced, who knows?" She waxed more daring in her impudence because she could not fathom his mood. He was smiling, equable; his glance softly, steadily searched her.

"Whose divorce are you talking of, Barbara?" her mother inquired, pricking up her ears at the word.

"Cynthia's."

"What!"

"Yes, and Ulrick's. I was suggesting myself for his second."

"Barbara, how can you?" Cynthia showed clearly that her sister's speech had revolted her.

"Well, I never——" Mrs. Cato began.

"Oh, just to keep him in the family. You know, mother, we *need* Ulrick in our family," Barbara wound up with rather shrill flippancy.

"A divorce, my child, would be an impossibility in our family in *any* circumstances," Mrs. Cato reproved her with a weight of dignity. "And our dear Ulrick's nature is such that I am sure no circumstances of the kind could ever arise. What God hath joined—ah, yes." She smiled kindly at Ulrick.

Ledyard, who had been frowning severely, broke in with: "I say, Babs, I think you go beyond the limits of good taste! *Honest* I do."

"Now, now!" Mr. Sample was full of mirth, but firm-toned, too. "I will not permit any one to impose limits on comrade. Certainly not a mere male brother."

"The deuce you won't!" Ledyard answered pettishly. "Well, I'm a mere male brother—and glad of it!" He turned on his heel and gave his attention to a portfolio of Cubist and Futurist reproductions.

"There aren't any strait-jackets for women these days," Barbara informed them. "If women can talk advanced views on one subject on the street corner, they can talk on others here. You

needn't try to protect me, Party, because I can protect myself. As for Cynthia—her disapproval of me expressed that purely feminine viewpoint which would put any new idea to death—kill it with shocks. Cynthia is only a lady. She hasn't learned yet that she is a *woman*—one of a *sex*."

"A sex or *the* sex?" Arvidsen asked, his eyes twinkling.

"*The* sex!" she flashed back at him. "Come down to Melton Hall on Tuesday and hear about *Us*. Party's going to speak, too—on eugenics. I'm to have a seat on the platform. Oh, you won't see me. I'll be in the back row somewhere, but it will be wonderful to be on the platform."

Ledyard sniffed.

"Honest, Babs, you women bore me excessively."

"We mean to!"

"Oh, well, go ahead with it then," he said, with profound disgust.

"We mean to!" she shrilled.

Even Cynthia laughed aloud at Ledyard's expression.

"I daren't say anything because I don't know anything," she said, "but I don't like what all this movement does to *people*. The moment they speak on that subject they *hammer* their views at one so! Then the only desire I have is to escape and cure my headache."

"There's the difference between my sister and me," Barbara cried. "I want freedom. Cynthia wants a headache cure!"

Out of the laughter that followed, Ledyard, with puckered brow, brought forth this wisdom:

"Oh, I say, you know! Honest, a genuine headache cure would be worth all the votes ever polled. Headache's responsible for a lot of crime, as well as legal mistakes—and family discord. Who knows how he ought to vote when he has a headache? Gosh, but I had a corker this morning! Ulrick made



"What is your view, Ulrich?" Barbara demanded.

me work through it, though. All right now. But it makes me say quite seriously that a genuine *and harmless* headache cure will do more for the race than suffrage or socialism or eugenics or anything."

"You absurd boy!" his mother said, only too glad to keep the conversation in such a polite channel. "There are dozens of headache cures. I have a wonderful prescription from Doctor Ulny—a new one, quite wonderful!"

"Yes, and when you take two doses,

you get numb in your finger tips and blue about the mouth. That's not a cure. That's a perpetual suicide. Besides, after a while it doesn't work. Then you have to get something else, and so it goes on till the undertaker comes in with a bunch of callas and a little rosewood box. No, believe *me*, Babs, what this whole world wants is one real cure, *for anything*, that has no bad effects! I'm with you, Cynthia, in this battle. I say, 'Cure my headache!'"

"Just the same, you know," Sample said when the laughter would permit speech, "there's more truth than jest in Mr. Lee's contention. After four thousand years of medicine, have we discovered one unfailing remedy for anything? Although I advocate eugenics, for instance, it's not because I think it will do anything for the nation's health. It won't. But it will compel a restrictive marriage license, and this will inevitably lift the hideous stigma from so-called illicit love and illegitimate birth. There'll be less of the latter, of course, because of the modern woman's enlightenment. It will help in the battle of this great movement to liberate pure instinct. This is not what I tell audiences from the platform, however. They would make short work of me if I did," he laughed. "On the platform I talk health regulations and pure marriage, highly capitalized and underscored. Oh, well, the day will dawn, perhaps, when the masses will not have to be tricked into taking steps toward their spiritual freedom. All right, Hittitsuka. Serve lunch."

Eugenics was a Greek word to Mrs. Cato, so she failed to get the import of Sample's speech.

"Ah, me! To think of my daughter on the platform! And I was so opposed to the whole thing!" she purred. "But of course I wouldn't *dream* of trying to coerce Barbara against her convictions. I think my children will tell you that I have never believed in coercion."

The children were silent from sheer amazement. Hittitsuka tangoed in with two large trays, which almost obscured him. He had donned his national costume, to serve them with color and atmosphere as well as with food, and the floating of his sleeves was something to admire. He wheeled in a load of small individual tables and stools cushioned with matting. These he set in a broken semicircle about the room. A knife

and fork and spoon, a plate, a cup and saucer, a bowl, a saltcellar—all of Japanese pattern—and a small thimble-deep vase with an artificial cherry-blossom sprig, went to each table.

"I hope you like this way of lunching," Sample remarked as he drew Mrs. Cato and Cynthia to seats near him. "I learned it from Hittitsuka, who considers it more graceful than the usual big table with stiff leather chairs. It makes food a pleasant incident of social intercourse, instead of making conversation a perfunctory adjunct to food. This is a mental age."

"Would you call most lunch conversation 'mental'?" Ulrick asked, smiling as he sank uncomfortably to his stool. He and Barbara had been placed side by side across the narrow room. Ledyard was by himself in the center. This arrangement left Hittitsuka plenty of space in which to serpentine among them with edibles.

"I'm a little island off the coast of Japan," Ledyard said merrily. He stuck his fraction of cherry blossom in his buttonhole.

"What is your husband's attitude toward the woman's movement, Mrs. Arvidsen?" Sample queried. "I might ask him, but I feel I always get a truer view of a man through a woman's eyes."

"I am afraid—I don't know," she answered, and flushed painfully.

"You see, Mr. Sample," Mrs. Cato broke in, "Cynthia is not at all interested in these matters, naturally, as she is so happily married. It would hardly be proper for her, *under the circumstances* now, would it?"

"What is your view, Ulrick?" Barbara demanded. "This is a show-down, old top. Come on. Never mind if you *haven't* given the question a thought till now. Let's have your views."

"You won't be the only person talking who never *thought*," Ledyard remarked pointedly. He was rewarded by an angry flash from Barbara's black



eyes. "But I can tell you, Cynthia and all of you, that lots of things go on in Ulrick's head that no one knows about. Even *I* don't," he added with innocent egotism.

"Come on, Ulrick! Squelch me if you can!"

"Why should I want to do that, sister—even if I could? You can't rouse sex antagonism in *me*, not even if you break my windows."

"Sex antagonism! Oh, of course! That's what the *men* call our movement. They——"

"Hold your horses, sister! I didn't call the whole suffrage cause 'sex antagonism.' My thinking isn't so untidy as that. But the bellicose ladies and the peregrinators are keeping that phrase pretty prominently in our thoughts."

"Because of wrongs and injustices and the——"

Hittitsuka interrupted her politely, but authoritatively, with soup; his kimono sleeve brooded like a benignant wing as he ladled it.

"There have been wrongs and injustices, sister, ever since Adam had two sons to carry out the bad ideas their mother picked up in the apple orchard. That's the stuff mortals are made of. If votes could touch the roots of wrong, even supposing men cared nothing about women's welfare, they would have voted *themselves* free of the injustices that weigh on them. They've had the vote long enough to have turned the State into a man's paradise if the vote could do it.

"Now when Miss Muenster, for instance—she's my stenographer—says that she is of age, sane, a fit citizen, and wants the vote simply as a matter of principle, I say, 'Sure!' That *sounds* fair and logical, though maybe it isn't. If it's a principle for women to vote, nothing can stop it. Governments will grant it automatically—as they have in Norway, Australia, and

some of our Western States. There were no bombs or parades or conspicuous fool stunts to bring it about in those places; nor to get municipal suffrage in some provinces of Canada—and in England, where women are even elected as town councilors."

"Why, Ulrick!" Barbara broke in. "You're mistaken. Women have no rights in England. Why would they be burning houses if they had?"

"Well, you see, Babs, when you couldn't answer my questions about those points, I had to look them up for myself. I could get plenty of *indignation* from you, but no *information*." He laughed at her chummily. "When I found out some things that the government over there already knows, I concluded that 'Mind your own business' is a good motto for nations as well as for neighbors. I even prefer it to yours, Mr. Sample," pointing jestingly to the motto over the chimneypiece. "I confess, after my cursory investigations, I don't want to see universal suffrage in Britain as long as she holds the balances between the nations. Considering that there are about a million and a quarter more women than men in Britain, it's conceivable that a petticoat government there might mess up the whole world's politics some future day. Far-fetched, of course, but possible. Some of the ladies have proved their willingness already."

"H'm, h'm!" Mr. Sample mused. "I still don't see where you stand. I mean in regard to woman's emancipation."

"Yes, Ulrick," Barbara put in. "The vote is such a small part of it. It's the whole freedom we women are working for."

"Freedom! Ah, yes!" Mrs. Cato sighed with soulful significance. Arvidsen's eyes twinkled appreciatively.

"As I said, I can see my stenographer's point of view," he replied to his interrogators, "though personally I'm

not convinced that there is a principle demanding the enfranchisement of women; and I fear the female vote would bring on us a lot of the stifling, restrictive sort of legislation—the tyrannical ‘You must not, or you must, because I think it’s good for you.’ Still, I may be wrong on that. But when I hear them telling how female suffrage will abolish graft, white slavery, prostitution, and intemperance, I wonder whether people who have so little common sense and reasoning power—let alone ability to observe facts—ought to be allowed to vote at all.

“You can’t legislate lust out of mortals. If any one of these evils existed from a separate and individual cause, its eradication would be easy; but they’re all one in essence, though they have different phases. Dishonesty, cruelty, avarice, lust, the qualities of materialism, can’t be cured by votes. To my thinking, the last thing that will cure them is a parade of sex in the public streets.”

“I know where you stand now!” Sample exclaimed. “For I’ve caught the note of prejudice that underlies all the opposition. It’s the sex consciousness you object to in woman. But, my dear sir, *that* is what you must face.”

“Woman has always been aware of her sex, hasn’t she?” Arvidsen replied quietly. “The fact that we are here proves it.”

“Ah, the very point!” To Arvidsen’s ears Sample’s enthusiasm sounded calculated. “No! Hitherto woman has not been sex conscious as an individual, but only in relation to specific man. She has accepted herself indeed, rather than known herself, as mother, as man’s subject mate. That is, her sex life has been dictated by man and chiefly through marriage, which was a masculine institution. But the woman of to-day is sex conscious without regard to specific man and without relation to maternity. She is taking hold of her

own individual life, shaping her own destiny, making her own laws. She is learning how to cope fearlessly with nature’s edict and how to defeat it through her all-conquering individualism.”

“Ah, yes, indeed. Life is so very different for young wives now, is it not?” Mrs. Cato said, not understanding Sample’s drift in the least. “When I think how much Cynthia has in her life in the way of amusement—particularly the auto trips. All that must of necessity change things for women. When I married Mr. Lee and had those three dear children, it was all that society expected of a young wife. Indeed, for women in Josieville in those days, our duties were our whole diversion, although we did have the French opera from New Orleans once a year—and once we had Booth.”

“If you had had an automobile, I wouldn’t have been born, eh, mother?” Cynthia asked.

“Oh, my dear!” Mrs. Cato was genuinely shocked on the religious side of her nature. “I’d certainly leave that to Providence.”

“You haven’t answered Party’s argument,” Barbara said. “Admit you can’t!”

“I can’t,” Arvidsen said obediently. “But I have some ideas about all this parading sex consciousness that I’d like to get out of my system. It’s showing itself aggressively even in the fashions. Women who should know better are dressing in a manner to invite the evil attention of street idlers, who don’t need their morals lowered at all. It looks as if the mere silly vanity of fashion is stronger in many women than the purity of person and the modesty we always associate with them. Militant encounters are different phases of the same thing. It’s the monomania of sex—nothing heroic about it, nothing beautiful, just the inability to see any-

thing else but sex, or to let others see anything else."

"They never burn houses with people in them," Barbara interrupted defensively. "They even wait till the services are over before they burn the churches. But has their government ever given them any credit for *that*? No! And yet the whole world talks about British justice! Such cant!"

Much to her indignation, Ulrick roared with laughter. When he could speak, he said:

"That doesn't change the morale of it. The building of a house isn't a material thing. It represents the creative and protective forces in the man. It reflects his highest ideal of citizenship and family responsibility. It embodies the hopes and desires and patient waiting of the woman, whose spiritual urge woke in him the need to build. If it is a public building, it crystallizes the dreams and labors of many homes. The women who set torch to that say frankly that they have no quarrel with the owners, but only want to destroy what the house stands for, and to force their will by this unbearable wounding. The Englishman's profound feeling for home is so generally recognized that there is a proverb about it. People who move every first of May don't understand it. I think I do. I used to dream of building when I first dipped off the boom at Mandalek and crawled up the mud bank into the old shack the company rented us. I was always seeing the house I was going to build and the woman and the children in it."

"You recall to me Ibsen's 'Master Builder'— But I don't suppose you have time for plays." Sample courteously offered Arvidsen an excuse in advance for his lack of letters.

"No. I haven't time or taste, either, I guess, for plays—except Ibsen and Shakespeare," Ulrick replied. "But I have this advantage—I can read Ibsen

in his own tongue and mine. I take it for granted you can't, because few folks bother with Norwegian that haven't been born to it." Arvidsen had no graces of conversation. He was silent until he knew what he wanted to say, and then he talked on until he had completed his idea. He gave others the same close, keen attention he demanded for himself.

"I deplore the argument that deduces everything from a sexual basis," he said, continuing his own line of thought. "While intelligence isn't a physical thing, it has its functions as much as the body has. That's why some men are lawyers and others are glassblowers. To exclude women from the government and the army and so forth isn't a slur on them any more than Nature was snubbing men when she excluded them from maternity. Mothering isn't a man's function in the State. We'd look fine making a hostile demonstration about it, wouldn't we? It is often said that human thought goes in circles. This woman movement looks to me a bit as if we'd reached again somewhat the same lap in the circuit that made the matriarchy possible—when woman had what we hear them clamoring for now, when she was sole owner of her person and her children and had the complete sex consciousness, which is only attainable without morals."

"Why, Ulrick, was there ever a time like that anywhere?" Barbara exclaimed in amazement.

"Yes, sister. You ought to be better up on feminine history than you are."

"Why didn't we hold on to it?"

"I guess we men just naturally couldn't stand for it," Ledyard put in. Ulrick laughed.

"Something like that," he agreed. "Men began to dream things. They abolished the matriarchy when they saw the first gleam of that institution we call the home—the thing your militant

sisters are burning down. Then they began to dream that other dream that goes with it—monogamy, one wife, one abiding place, a man-protected, man-ruled spot for the creating and the fostering of the family, the beginning of the State, the nucleus of the nation. Men have poured out rivers of blood on the threshold of that dream to keep the lingering banes from the brute pits from crossing it and entering."

"Ulrick, you know very well that men are not monogamists," Barbara cried defiantly.

"Barbara, how can you say such things before your sister?" Mrs. Cato reproved her sharply. "Married men, of course, are monogamists."

"It's kindly meant, mother," Ulrick's eyes were twinkling again. "But this is the place of frank speech, and I guess we must admit that monogamy isn't a wholly achieved ideal yet. But men have never let go the dream; and dreams that are held come true at last. Woman has become to us the embodiment of our highest ideal and the custodian of that dream. Not as 'boss' and man's temporary mate, but in her position of servitude and dependence—if you will call it by these names—she brought out in us such spirituality as we have. In the mist that envelops us she holds up the torch, the spiritual ideal, and we grope toward it. But the hand that lifts that torch never put a bomb in a building or ignited paraffin rags in a home—or buttoned on a slit hobble skirt. It seems there are many men and women to-day who 'think they think'—as Miss Muenster puts it—and are consequently so immersed in the mist of theories and cure-alls and the smoke of venial passions that they are forgetting, and making others forget, the beginnings of life! You ought to be thankful there are still some of us peasants left. We are close enough to the earth to have retained a clutch on the primitives."

Mrs. Cato was humiliated and annoyed by her son-in-law's calm allusion to his humble birth.

"My dear Ulrick," she said in her most condescending manner, "you are *too* ridiculous! I'm sure Mr. Sample knows that a man who can read a famous author in the Norwegian—and for pleasure, too—cannot possibly be a peasant."

"Don't apologize for me, mother-in-law. I'm comfortable in being a peasant. I'd be found out quick enough if I pretended to be anything else."

"I don't mind your being a peasant," Barbara said. "In fact, I like it. We've had too much patrician gore in our family veins. Blasphemy! Look at mother's face! But I detest your peasant views of women."

"I can't help that, Babs. The only woman I know real well is my mother, and she never wore a hat or a pair of gloves in her life. She had five of us, and she has worked hard for us. She obeys my father, I guess, in the primitive fashion, six days in the week; but he minds her in spiritual matters and goes to church Sunday because she says so. She never tried to do my father's work; but, because she did her own so well, he and we three elder boys were considered the best men on the river before I branched out. We hadn't a thing to do but tend to our business. She sent us out to it, well fed, cared for, harmonized, and strong. We brought it back to her in the results of our labor."

"That's too tame for me!" Barbara said. "I'll call no man 'master.'"

"Don't—till you're asked!" Ledyard snapped at her.

Cynthia had ceased all effort to take part in the discussion. She was feeling bewildered and frightened to find that her apparently placid and well-ordered world was full of intense thought, and that Ulrick had very closely pondered the subject of woman.

"Sister, a man who makes love to a woman, yet wants to leave her free, doesn't care anything about her. It's himself he wants to leave free. The primitive man's sense of possession is just his need to possess his spiritual light—to have surely and abidingly his the thing that lifts him through the mists of passion; because he corresponds to the creative spirit, just as the spirit of the fostering life is the primal nature of the woman. The urge of the seed is in the man, and, because he looks at her as the soil to nourish and grow the seed, he wants her to be pure soil, life conscious as the fields for grain—but not sex conscious. A wanton is sex conscious. That's her difference from a spiritually minded woman."

"Oh!" Barbara cried out savagely. "Only when women are free—free as air—will such loathsome words as 'wanton' go out of the language. No one will dare then to scorn the woman who has craved life and love enough to take them in—*in spite of*—of—granite-faced fogies. I can see what mercy a woman would get from you if she 'went wrong,' as I suppose you'd call it!"

"Is it necessary to discuss such creatures?" Mrs. Cato was decidedly angry.

"I was just going to say," Ledyard remarked, "that I prefer the old style of lunching when, as Mr. Sample said, food was the main thing and conversation was incidental and *scarce*."

"Ledyard, be silent!" his mother ordered sharply. "Mr. Sample will think I haven't brought you up properly." The boy flushed and bent over his plate.

"I hope I'd have the sense to help any woman in trouble," Arvidsen said gravely. "And I hope I wouldn't turn a raving sentimentalist. I guess I'm just an optimist. I don't reckon with the past. I think it's always to-day; and to-day is the time to do differently.

As to woman's power in the world—constructing affairs of men, women are successful when they take hold of life as a spiritual force, not as a sex. The kind of thinking that is inspired by sexual self-consciousness is not intelligent, but degenerate. It's in the mist, stumbling back to chaos. It increases human problems; it doesn't solve any."

"You would keep woman from advancing?" Sample shrugged. "My dear sir, turn back the tides of the sea!"

"I suppose I do seem pretty hopeless from your point of view. But to me this public parade of sex, and the note of sex challenge in so much of the women's talk, is retrogressive, not progressive. Barbara scolds me for mentioning sex antagonism in connection with the woman movement. But what is it Spencer tells us in his 'First Principles'? That the statement of anything includes the implied statement of its opposite. So the very words, 'woman's movement,' include the statement of man in terms of antagonism. If you don't know that, it's because your thinking is superficial.

"The last time we took my peripatetic sister here to the East, we heard some woman on the platform say in regard to militancy that she had an ancestress in the Revolution who loaded guns for her menfolks; and the platform lady added that she would honor this ancestress as much if she had loaded guns to fight for women instead of loading them to fight for men. That's a fair sample of the stuff that's talked—superficial, insincere, and bombastic. The women who loaded guns in the Revolution didn't do it to 'fight for men.' They were neither sex conscious nor sex antagonistic. They were helping those who fought for them and for their children and their homes, which were so sacredly dear to them; for the Republic, for the genuine principles of liberty and of domestic and





*"You can't pretend your wife gives you a different sensation every minute, or every hour.  
I mean Mrs. Sample."*

national life, which are too large and high for the comprehension of a descendant who could quote her ancestress' deed and distort the significance of it! It made me think of some paltry player in a burlesque show suddenly pulling out an American flag to get a little cheap applause for himself when his own performance was too faky to get it.

"It may be because English isn't my native tongue and I had such work to master it—and to acquire a moderate

vocabulary—that I hate so to have words twisted round to convey a false meaning. Why call violent attacks on innocent persons 'heroism'? Why call physical things 'spiritual'? Heroism means—well, the Scott polar party delaying their journey rather than desert Oates, the sick man; and it means Oates walking secretly out of his tent to his death to set them free of their obligation. No brass-band effects. No self-advertising. Just an inherent nobility and a love of human life that

was too big and deep for any other consideration."

"Ulrick, are you just saying these things off the reel, or have you been thinking them for some time?" Barbara asked. She seemed to have grown serious suddenly. And Sample inserted the question:

"You experience no thrill at the sight of a great sex organization spreading over the world?"

"How is a man to help thinking of women, Barbara, when every paper or magazine he picks up chokes it into him—besides all the parading and proselyting trips through the business section? I don't like this woman question a bit really, but it is insistent. It forces people to find out what they think about it. No, Mr. Sample, I don't thrill at the idea of women organizing. It's a backward step. Men who are thinkers are not only seeking a world-wide peace and the abolition of the army, which was practically the first organization, but they are finding out the uselessness of strifeful organization in all branches of work and trade. Canada leads us there with a law that prevents organizations of labor and capital equally from tying up the public business in their disputes. Canada turns what was organization for strife—or self, the same thing—into a tool for universal service.

"Men realize—vaguely still, perhaps—that the old-time violent and materialistic methods are not big enough for the needs of *our* time. But women are beginning to organize to a stultifying point. Half a dozen of them can't go to the theater together three times without organizing into a club to do it! They can't give a bite to a beggar without a suite of offices and a couple of vice presidents. With the result we see in a recent charity association's report—three hundred and ninety-nine dollars spent in relieving distress and five thousand dollars spent in salaries,

rent, and expenses of investigating cases! No, that's not a joke; it's really true.

"Women used to believe in God and in the human sentiments of love for all and unselfish service, and in spiritual power. Now, when the world—man's world, as you call it so indignantly—is struggling free from the limits of materialism, seeing the error and futility of strifeful organization, seeing that it has always crushed out the spirit of mankind and blurred its light, why does woman, our torch bearer hitherto, fling away that light into a murk of materialism, and seize upon the weapon men are trying to put by forever? We can't follow her now if we want to, because the stone hammer sends back no brightness through the mist."

Hittitsuka was clearing away the little tables. Soon he brought individual smoking stands, and passed about tiny cigarettes. He refused to take Barbara's frightened rejections seriously. Arvidsen watched her with amusement for a moment, then he whispered:

"No use, sister. He insists in believing in your emancipation. Better take it and then get rid of it afterward."

This was unheard by the others. Mrs. Cato was delicately and cruelly attempting to wither Sample for having lit his cigarette without asking her permission. That gentleman, however, was oblivious.

"It won't last long," Ulrick said, continuing his own thought aloud, as was his habit. "As soon as people put all their faith in their organization, per se, it goes to pieces. We've seen it in politics here recently. I'd always voted Republican till last November. I changed mainly because of Wilson's speech accepting the nomination—when he said, in regard to the nation, that it wasn't what people thought, but what they felt that mattered. I thought I was willing to see a man in the White House who had been through all the

shackles of organization and yet had stayed big enough to see that."

## CHAPTER VI.

Ledyard had been listening to Arvidsen's portions of the discussion with frank pride. It was evident that the young scion of the Ledyards and the Lees had a feeling for his alien brother-in-law not far removed from hero worship.

"I *am* glad to have Ulrick's views on this woman thing," he said. "One thing I like about Ulrick is he's such an out-and-out *man*. If you ask *me*, I think a lot of men are getting as mushy and sloppy and limp as the women are getting noisy and assertive. You know what I mean—tears in the voice when they hear a daisy blooming! I think they must be responsible for a lot of this feminine reaction against nature. They're a libel on our sex and ought to be fed on roach powder. As to women, I wonder Ulrick can have such a high ideal of them, because they run after him so. Of course, his wife is a perfectly proper, dear, little person, being my sister. But I shouldn't call her a protection exactly—not for such a great, go-ahead husky as Ulrick—"

Cynthia interrupted him with a tensiety she tried to hide in a laugh.

"Why not? Where do I fail as the ideal protection for Ulrick?" She glanced at Arvidsen. He was amused.

"Oh, you're too placid—and white, like a plaster-of-Paris saint. See? Ulrick needs a lot more than that, I should say, to protect him from women. They're just crazy about him."

"Ledyard!" Mrs. Cato's refined sensibilities were wounded; but the lad's impatience at the whole subject of women had passed the controlling point.

"Well, they *are*!" he vociferated. "You wouldn't think he was Babs' brother-in-law, the way she carries on

with him. I wonder Cynthia doesn't pull her hair. Mother ought to smack her. But Babs is mild compared to some of them. Honey for flies—that's Ulrick. I've *seen* 'em cluster! 'Tisn't his fault, of course, that he's the handsomest man in America."

"Here, not so fast!" Arvidsen admonished.

"Nobody need try to hush me, because I'm good and going, and I'll say my say." Ledyard was smoking violently, between phrases. "If women were really so sex conscious as Mr. Sample thinks they are, they'd be onto their sex, I'd think. They may have sex consciousness, but they haven't any sex ontoness! They'd keep the other women off their husbands if they had. I suppose Cynthia thinks Ulrick never sees a woman from the time he leaves her in the morning till he comes home in the evening. But what are the *facts*? Women! Women flocking into our building all day long, like doves into a cote. Women of all sorts limping around in high heels and silk hobbles, rustling and flirting into all the offices, proselytizing and collecting for everything under the sun.

"We men, who have work to do, have to be polite and lose our time just because they are women. You know what would happen to *men* who tried those tricks in business hours! And selling tickets! That must be a fat graft! 'Can I interest you in *this* to-day, dear young sir?' Pur, pur, pussy kitty! Then there are the women who use their really legitimate business as a means for flirtation. They're the *most* dangerous to a man's morals—"

"Be quiet, Ledyard!" Mrs. Cato found her son's behavior more shocking than Barbara's, probably because he was attached to no "movement" that might justify his improper speeches.

"No, mother, I won't be quiet! Very respectfully, I won't! I think you should know what's going on, so as to

keep a rein on Babs. You'd think some of the women imagine that if they blink and smile at Ulrick maybe he'll double their interest or wish ten extra shares at par on them! I don't blame 'em, you know. Ulrick's magnetic."

"Magnetic's the word, old top!" Barbara squeezed Arvidsen's arm. "You big lion—with eyes like a field of violets!"

She was suddenly feverish again, her eyes bold, her whole manner immodest and assertive, her dark skin hotly flushed, and a nervous, strained sharpness broke through her usually soft speech in tones so shrill with barely hidden excitement that even unobservant and unanalytical Cynthia noted the implied disturbance and thought that her sister was hysterically tired. Cynthia felt unaccountably jarred by Barbara's familiarity toward Arvidsen. She had noticed it casually in recent months, but it had never affected her quite as it did to-day.

Ulrick laughed. Cynthia winced at the memory of her mother's words about his "commonness." Evidently he lacked the subtle refinement that would have made him feel affronted at Barbara's manner. Yet even in that moment the query came: "Why shouldn't the girl's manner be intimate—yes, and coquettish, too, if she chooses—toward her brother-in-law, who is all that a blood brother could be to her?" And Cynthia recognized unwillingly that the stab and the anger that were suddenly sore in her were not hurt delicacy and offended breeding, but plain jealousy. She had not the gift—if it were a gift—of intimacy. She could not be even playfully impudent. She could not seek the touch of hand or lip, could not openly lure with her eyes and mouth, could never give—only respond. Could she do so much, indeed? Had she not merely accepted, endured, let her taken hand lie passive in her husband's from her wedding morn until now?

Ledyard was still talking vigorously: "Ulrick's magnetic. Men feel it. They do what he says. They feel it would be a mistake not to. But if Cynthia knew the sensation he creates among women, why, she'd be green with jealousy. Honest, when we were up at Mandalek last spring, I thought there'd be a tragedy. I had awful visions of a family split, and Ulrick kidnapped. All due to a blue-eyed darling in a blue hat and gown. Never mind her name. I called her 'Cadet Blue'—for several reasons."

"I think it's time I took my biographer back to the office," Arvidsen broke in. He tried to rise, but Barbara pushed him back and held him.

"No, you don't! I want to hear this. Party, I believe that, after having been so sat upon for our frank speech, we're going to find out that my most worthy kinsman is an apostle of the secret freedom!"

"Oh, Barbara!" Cynthia cried, with a sudden gush of intense anger. Barbara laughed.

"Rotten taste, Babs!" Ledyard said, and hurried on with his tale ere Mrs. Cato could take the floor, as he saw her preparing to do.

"Cadet Blue was intimately related to the men we were fighting. That's just business; though I understand it all perfectly myself, of course, I'm not going to explain it to you people. But it was very important and meant a lot. So she came butting in. I could see it was a plot right away. Samson-and-Delilah sort of thing. Then she lost her head and ran after us like a shadow. She flirted with me a good bit at first, so I didn't get onto it for quite a while that she was crazy about Ulrick. But that's a woman's treachery. What made me think of her is that she's been dodging round our building all day. In blue, as usual. Pretty as a flower, but treacherous. She's emancipated, if you like! Ulrick was always

awfully nice to her—which I thought was a pity, because she took it for encouragement."

"Perhaps it was!" Barbara cried.

"I am positive it *wasn't*!" Mrs. Cato asserted, with emphasis. "I'm ashamed of your remarks, my son. I consider them mere gossip." She regarded her son-in-law narrowly as she purred her last phrase.

"Go on, Ledyard. I want to hear. Ulrick doesn't tell me of his conquests." Cynthia was surprised at herself for her achieved flippancy. The introduction of Cadet Blue had markedly increased the unrest induced by Barbara's flirtatious deportment, and she wanted to know more. Ulrick was lighting a cigar. She thought that his eyes, more fully revealed in the match flame, were curiously aware and noncommittal. "How little I know him!" she thought. "Less than any one in all his world, perhaps."

"Of course, Ulrick *wasn't* really encouraging her. And if he had done so, I wouldn't tell it, because we men should hold together in these matters. Cadet Blue did all *she* knew to make herself a temptation, I'll say *that* for her! But Ulrick beat the whole family in that deal. Now up she bobs again, just as we have the same sort of business on our hands. Though, as far as that's concerned, she's been visible to *my* naked eye, promenading the streets of our fair city, off and on ever since we met her up there. I pointed her out to Ulrick one day from the window of the Union Club. He pretended he didn't recognize her—the old fox!"

"The reason I bring this matter up now is that I consider it has a bearing on the woman question. Men ought to make a law—or have a society or something—to suppress these office-and-business flirts. Up at Mandalek, I took Cadet Blue driving and flower picking, and really I wasted quite a lot of time on her before I found out it was really

Ulrick she was after. So I speak from experience when I say that a young man who has his way to make in the world has just *got* to join the anti-De-lilahs. I think we men ought to band together to subdue these women. I really do. *I really do!*"

Arvidsen let out one of his occasional lusty shouts of laughter which suggested the boy time of manhood challenging the forest silence with its note of careless, strong joy. It did not harmonize with the pastel shades and bric-a-brac of Mr. Sample's rooms. The host made a sign to Hittitsuka, who floated in with tiny glasses of some sweetish Oriental liquor.

"Ah, me!" Sample sighed, partly in amusement. "How many æons of woman's educational processes must we undergo ere the first utterance of young masculinity regarding the feminine will be other than the cave man's cry: 'Let me subdue her!' Come! Let Hittitsuka show you through my other rooms. It's his pride and joy to do it."

"I'm afraid I haven't a minute more to spare," Arvidsen replied to his host's invitation. Barbara had stopped him before the easel, evidently to get his comment on the "study." Ledyard, Cynthia, and Mrs. Cato were following the rapt Hittitsuka down the hall.

"How do you like me as a painted lady?" she asked flippantly, hanging to his huge shoulder by her looped hands, as she seemed fond of doing.

"Fine! You're as red and black as a deck of cards, aren't you? I thought you were a landscape at first. Shows all I know about art—and all I know about *you*," he added, in a lower tone.

"You've said something very true there." Sample was tilting the sketch at a new angle. "That is the new art. It doesn't try to paint a thing—or person—not as it is. Because the new art knows that *nothing* is. Nothing is but sensation. Through sensation I imagine a universe; I conceive cities,



countries, women; I imagine travel, love; and I paint."

"You mean you imagine you paint," Ulrick interrupted genially. Sample smiled politely, if not with genuine humor, and continued:

"The picture looks only like my sensation of one passing, irrecoverable hour. There can be no such thing as a permanent likeness of any thing, because nothing is, in my universe, but sensation, and that is different every hour, because the vibrations are different."

"H'm," Ulrick pondered. "It would get me nervous to be changing my universe every twenty seconds."

He slipped his arm around Barbara firmly, and so turned her with him from the easel directly to Sample.

"You can't pretend your wife gives you a different sensation every minute, or every hour. I mean Mrs. Sample. She looks much the same to you daily, doesn't she?"

The question was so sudden and imperative, so entirely out of polite order, that Sample was surprised into answering it directly.

"Yes." Then he asked blankly: "You know—you have met somewhere?"

"No. I saw her name in connection with some show or 'hike'— Oh, yes, a meeting at Melton Hall last week." He felt Barbara weighing limply against his arm. Sample was looking at her. Evidently he felt a little awkward and a trifle amused.

"That was I. Mrs. Sample is at present in the South for her health. The climate of Minnesota is a little too rigorous for her, so she went to Florida when my lectures brought me here for the winter."

"That's funny. Printer's error, probably. Are you in sympathy regarding woman's emancipation?"

"Oh, perfectly, perfectly! Mrs. Sample is broad-minded, a new woman

in every respect—almost more advanced than I am, in some matters. If *she* had been here to-day, *she* could really have answered you." He half glanced at Barbara, not meeting her eyes. "A printer's error—odd! Well—these things happen."

"I—I never saw it," Barbara laughed shrilly. "Fancy *you* seeing it—and in the paper! Fancy that, old top!" It was doubtful whether she knew what she was saying.

"Well, Mr. Sample, this has been an enjoyable affair, but I must tell my wife good-by and run." He nodded pleasantly, and strode in the direction whence came Ledyard's frank comments and Mrs. Cato's purs of praise.

Barbara's eyes were as black and lightless as Sample's brush had depicted them, her face chalky. She clutched the back of Ulrick's chair.

"You never told me you were married," she said huskily.

"My dear comrade"—his tone and manner were gently remonstrative—"it has nothing to do with our pleasant friendship."

"Nothing—nothing to do?" she repeated vaguely. "You deceived me." She seemed to be trying to grasp at something that was eluding her.

"Deceived you? Nonsense, nonsense, dear child!" He patted her hand lightly. "What a heavy-drama phrase for this little spot of sun and joy! And what a way for my little poetess of pure nature to speak to her playfellow! Have I ever tried to put any shackles on you?"

"Shackles? Why, Party, you knew you didn't *need* to," she answered, blankly amazed at his question.

"How sweet of you to say that!" he said prettily. "Dear child, our association is quite a thing of itself. If something has seemed to touch it jarringly—er—we must realize that the continuance of that association depends on how we meet these little jarring

touches. I know you are not going to disappoint me, are you?" After this little speech, which did not sound extempore, he waited not for reply, but hastened to speed his parting guests. She stared after him with dazed eyes.

"I may have to leave for Mandalek to-night," Arvidsen said to Cynthia. "Where will I phone you?"

"We shall be at Mrs. Wright's reception until late," Mrs. Cato answered for her. "We shan't leave there, I'm sure, till about seven. We must go home and rest now before dressing. You know, Mr. Sample, these Western social functions are rather tedious to me personally, and, I must say, a little absurd; but my daughter feels that some observance of them is necessary—at least until Mr. Arvidsen removes his headquarters to New York." She turned to Barbara, and missed the appreciative twinkle in Arvidsen's eyes. "Barbara, child, I suppose you can't come to Mrs. Wright's if you are going over to St. Paul for the night."

"Going over to emancipate the Saint Pollys to-night, sister? Better rest up at home." Cynthia, watching him, thought that his expression was peculiar as he spoke to Barbara. The girl answered him defiantly:

"Rest, indeed! Freedom—that's what we women want! Hear us cry for it. Give me a man's freedom. You know!" She laughed hysterically.

"Babs, I think you're disgusting. You're as bad as Ulrick's Cadet Blue. Come on, boss. Do we cab, taxi, or hoof it?"

Ledyard linked arms with Arvidsen. Hittitsuka, spinning, smiling, bobbing, held the door open for them. He waved a long pink cherry spray, to make their exit beautiful.

While Barbara was adjusting her hat with cold fingers, Cynthia called to her husband suddenly:

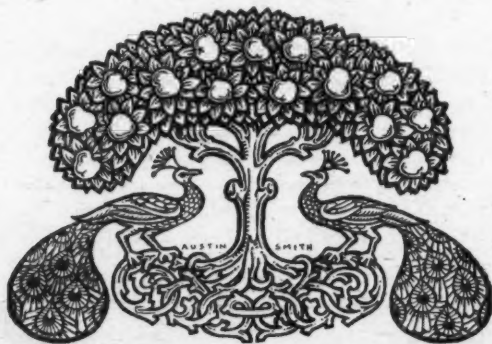
"Oh, Ulrick, take me to Mandalek with you! I've never seen a lumber town."

Before he could answer, Mrs. Cato exclaimed:

"Cynthia! What nonsense! Do you suppose Ulrick wants to be bothered with you when he's on business? A lumber town is no place for a refined woman at any time, I'm sure. Perhaps, if you're very good, Ulrick will let you go to New York soon again for a few weeks."

By the time her speech was ended, Ulrick was waving to his wife from the departing elevator.

TO BE CONCLUDED IN THE MARCH NUMBER OF SMITH'S.





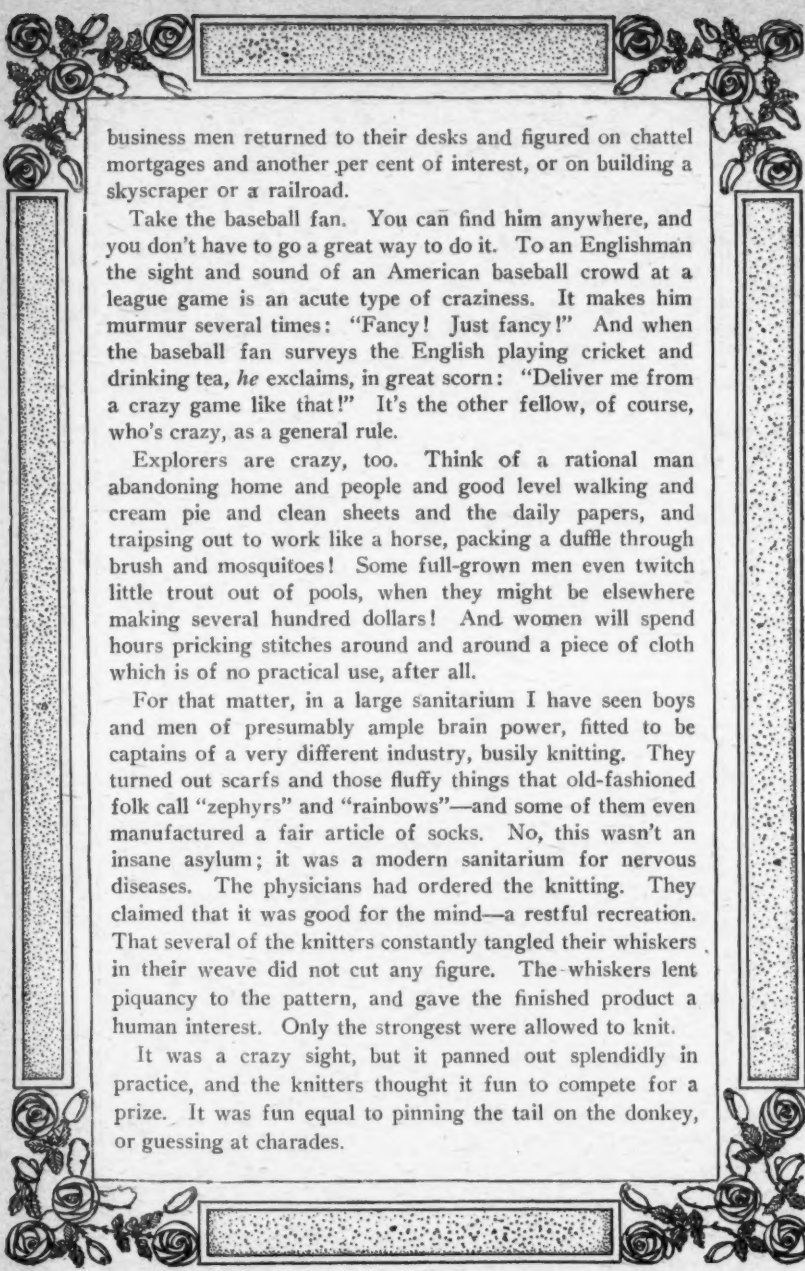
## ON FADS

By Edwin L. Sabin

THERE used to be a comic-supplement series on "Isn't It Fun to be Crazy?" The comic supplement isn't a very high grade of intellectual entertainment (Say, though, I wonder what stunt the Katzenjammer Kids will be up to next! And did you notice the latest argument of Mutt and Jeff? Haw, haw!), but it frequently contains more truth than poetry—gives a sugar-coated dose of human nature, you know. What I had started in to remark is that a spice of craziness does bring a little fun, not only in the comic supplement, but in real life also. A fellow finds relief from the monotony of merely doing things that he has to do.

Almost everybody has a touch of foolishness in him, although sometimes he guards it as closely as if it were a sort of a skeleton in the closet. You see, foolishness can range from babies and kodaks to hoeing the garden. For my part—confidentially speaking, for I wouldn't have it spread abroad—I perfectly adore getting out in the grove back of the house and playing "Injun." I can use my cane as a Kentucky squirrel rifle, and peer and snoop and scout from tree to tree. Very few people know of this craziness in decorous me. It is such a far cry from watering the lawn and pounding the typewriter under spectacles that I really imagine nobody suspects the crazy streak. Yet an hour or two of enjoyably killing Injuns and tracking the wildest of wild beasts, foreign and domestic, tides one over another long grind of paying the grocer and the tax collector.

All right; laugh! Sneer a bit! But for a prevailing form of foolish craziness, how about moving pictures? Why, I have seen the very staidest and most reliable of hard business men sit at the movies and whoop and holler while the fat man performed, or various persons landed on their heads in mud puddles; then, next morning, these same



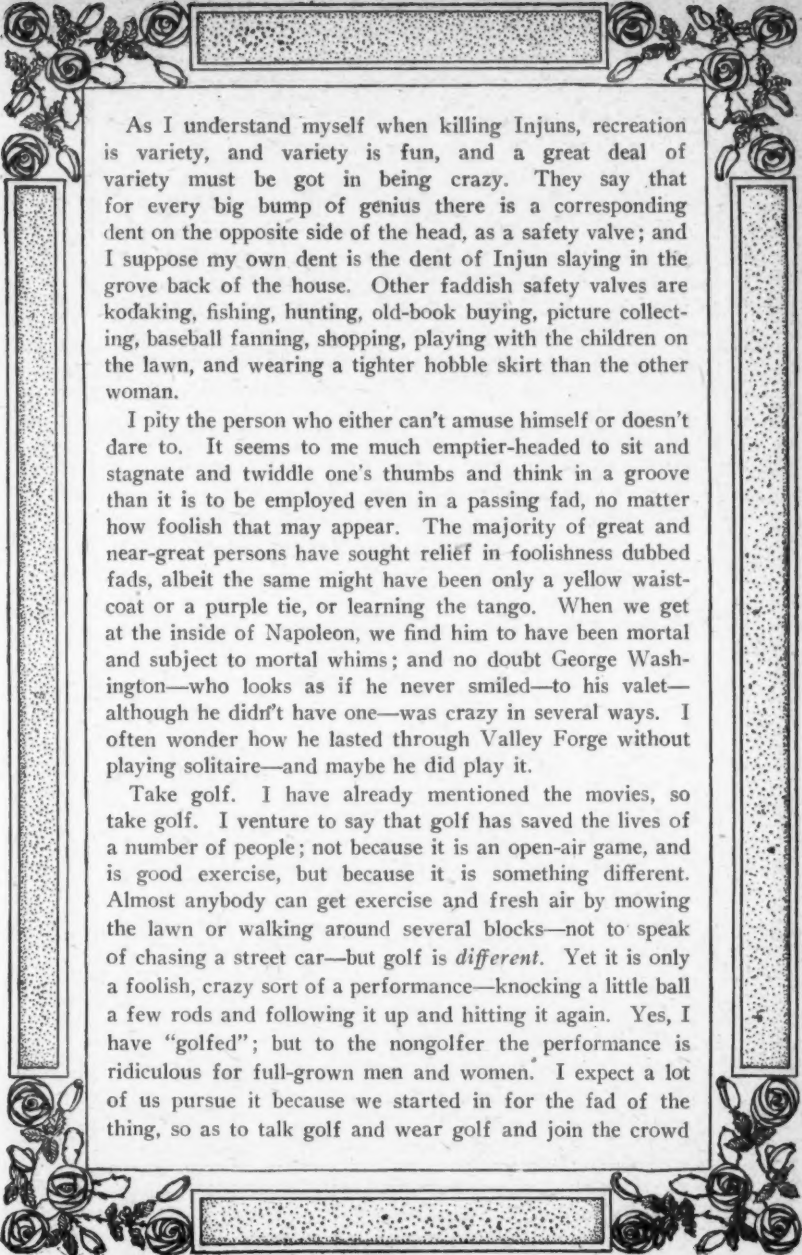
business men returned to their desks and figured on chattel mortgages and another per cent of interest, or on building a skyscraper or a railroad.

Take the baseball fan. You can find him anywhere, and you don't have to go a great way to do it. To an Englishman the sight and sound of an American baseball crowd at a league game is an acute type of craziness. It makes him murmur several times: "Fancy! Just fancy!" And when the baseball fan surveys the English playing cricket and drinking tea, *he* exclaims, in great scorn: "Deliver me from a crazy game like that!" It's the other fellow, of course, who's crazy, as a general rule.

Explorers are crazy, too. Think of a rational man abandoning home and people and good level walking and cream pie and clean sheets and the daily papers, and traipsing out to work like a horse, packing a duffle through brush and mosquitoes! Some full-grown men even twitch little trout out of pools, when they might be elsewhere making several hundred dollars! And women will spend hours pricking stitches around and around a piece of cloth which is of no practical use, after all.

For that matter, in a large sanitarium I have seen boys and men of presumably ample brain power, fitted to be captains of a very different industry, busily knitting. They turned out scarfs and those fluffy things that old-fashioned folk call "zephyrs" and "rainbows"—and some of them even manufactured a fair article of socks. No, this wasn't an insane asylum; it was a modern sanitarium for nervous diseases. The physicians had ordered the knitting. They claimed that it was good for the mind—a restful recreation. That several of the knitters constantly tangled their whiskers in their weave did not cut any figure. The whiskers lent piquancy to the pattern, and gave the finished product a human interest. Only the strongest were allowed to knit.

It was a crazy sight, but it panned out splendidly in practice, and the knitters thought it fun to compete for a prize. It was fun equal to pinning the tail on the donkey, or guessing at charades.

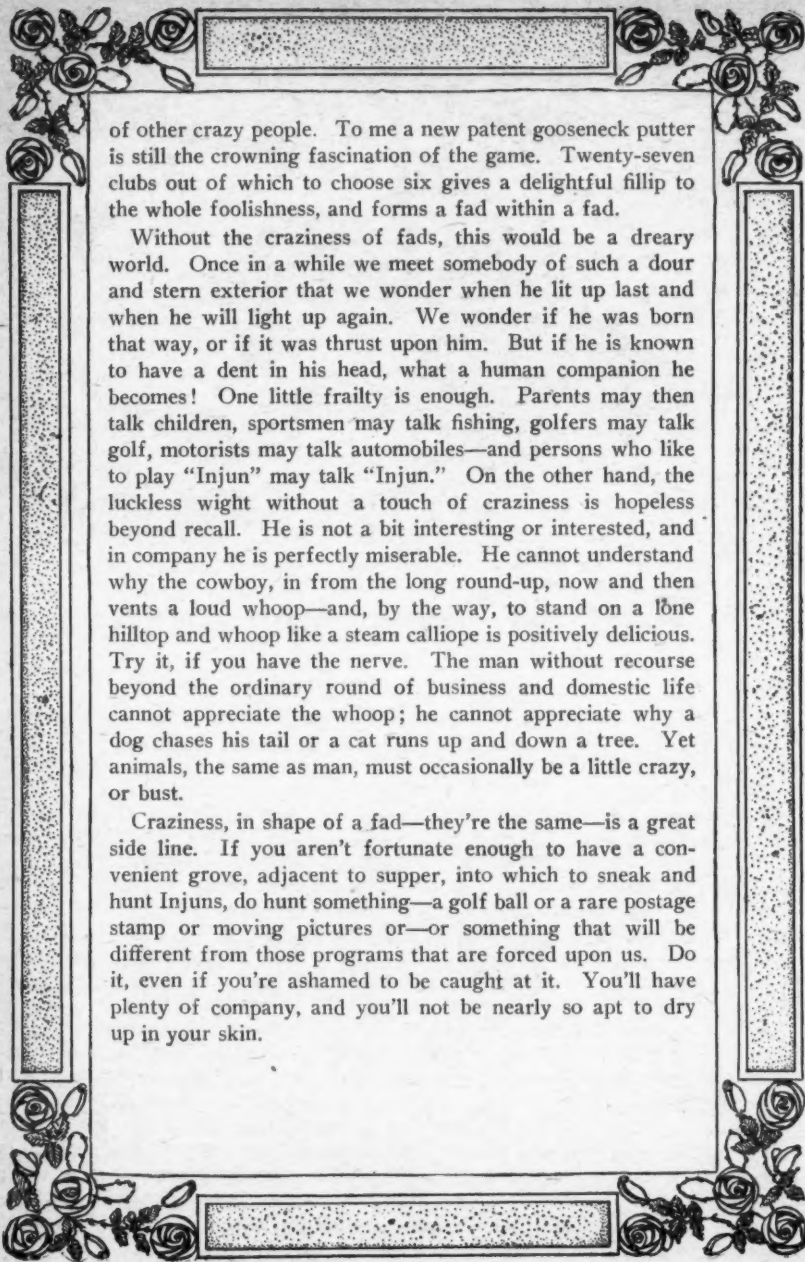


As I understand myself when killing Injuns, recreation is variety, and variety is fun, and a great deal of variety must be got in being crazy. They say that for every big bump of genius there is a corresponding dent on the opposite side of the head, as a safety valve; and I suppose my own dent is the dent of Injun slaying in the grove back of the house. Other faddish safety valves are kodaking, fishing, hunting, old-book buying, picture collecting, baseball fanning, shopping, playing with the children on the lawn, and wearing a tighter hobble skirt than the other woman.

I pity the person who either can't amuse himself or doesn't dare to. It seems to me much emptier-headed to sit and stagnate and twiddle one's thumbs and think in a groove than it is to be employed even in a passing fad, no matter how foolish that may appear. The majority of great and near-great persons have sought relief in foolishness dubbed fads, albeit the same might have been only a yellow waistcoat or a purple tie, or learning the tango. When we get at the inside of Napoleon, we find him to have been mortal and subject to mortal whims; and no doubt George Washington—who looks as if he never smiled—to his valet—although he didn't have one—was crazy in several ways. I often wonder how he lasted through Valley Forge without playing solitaire—and maybe he did play it.

Take golf. I have already mentioned the movies, so take golf. I venture to say that golf has saved the lives of a number of people; not because it is an open-air game, and is good exercise, but because it is something different. Almost anybody can get exercise and fresh air by mowing the lawn or walking around several blocks—not to speak of chasing a street car—but golf is *different*. Yet it is only a foolish, crazy sort of a performance—knocking a little ball a few rods and following it up and hitting it again. Yes, I have "golfed"; but to the nongolfer the performance is ridiculous for full-grown men and women. I expect a lot of us pursue it because we started in for the fad of the thing, so as to talk golf and wear golf and join the crowd





of other crazy people. To me a new patent gooseneck putter is still the crowning fascination of the game. Twenty-seven clubs out of which to choose six gives a delightful fillip to the whole foolishness, and forms a fad within a fad.

Without the craziness of fads, this would be a dreary world. Once in a while we meet somebody of such a dour and stern exterior that we wonder when he lit up last and when he will light up again. We wonder if he was born that way, or if it was thrust upon him. But if he is known to have a dent in his head, what a human companion he becomes! One little frailty is enough. Parents may then talk children, sportsmen may talk fishing, golfers may talk golf, motorists may talk automobiles—and persons who like to play "Injun" may talk "Injun." On the other hand, the luckless wight without a touch of craziness is hopeless beyond recall. He is not a bit interesting or interested, and in company he is perfectly miserable. He cannot understand why the cowboy, in from the long round-up, now and then vents a loud whoop—and, by the way, to stand on a lone hilltop and whoop like a steam calliope is positively delicious. Try it, if you have the nerve. The man without recourse beyond the ordinary round of business and domestic life cannot appreciate the whoop; he cannot appreciate why a dog chases his tail or a cat runs up and down a tree. Yet animals, the same as man, must occasionally be a little crazy, or bust.

Craziness, in shape of a fad—they're the same—is a great side line. If you aren't fortunate enough to have a convenient grove, adjacent to supper, into which to sneak and hunt Injuns, do hunt something—a golf ball or a rare postage stamp or moving pictures or—or something that will be different from those programs that are forced upon us. Do it, even if you're ashamed to be caught at it. You'll have plenty of company, and you'll not be nearly so apt to dry up in your skin.



## Beating Back for Laura

By Ellis Parker Butler

Author of "P. Casey, \$4.00," "In Training," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY H. VON S. JONES

**B**Y George, you know, civilization's something, isn't it? A chap has to think of civilization and all that sort of thing when he comes to think of it. A chap can't go out with a stone ax and knock a girl on the head and drag her to his lair nowadays, can he? Pretty mess he'd be in, with all these cops and coroners and grand juries and things. Sounds all right, I dare say, but it isn't done. A chap don't get married that way now, does he? Answer—no!

You can't think of a decent sort of chap trotting down to some musty old secondhand shop and buying a mildewed stone hatchet and then trotting over to some lady's house and knock-

ing his best girl on the head, can you? Break her diamond barette for her and crack her skull if he wasn't right careful how he swung the deadly tool, and then where would he be? In jail, my boy! And this business of taking the girl by the hair and dragging her to her new but happy home isn't what it was in the stone age. It may sound romantic and all that sort of thing, but girls' paters don't look at it that way. Abduction is what they call it.

I dare say the stone-age fellow was a manly chap, but you've got to think of civilization. Things change. There was old Henderby's chauffeur, who was a right decent chap, I dare say, and all he did was ask old Henderby's daughter

to marry him, and she was willing, and they were properly married—license, minister, and all that—and what did he get? A month in jail for abducting the girl, and might have got worse only he compromised and let the old folks cook up a divorce. And he didn't even knock the girl on the head with a monkey wrench. He didn't drag her along the road by the hair. They went to the minister's in old Henderby's six-cylinder. Abducting a girl is the last thing I ever expected to do, but I abducted Laura. Right! I "beat back" to the stone age, as these chaps call it, and abducted her by main strength. What do you think of Jacky Everby Vandeventer doing that? Listen!

I was sitting on the bench beside the third court at the country club, and I was pretty well worried. Higgins & Fitch had sent me out a new racket, half an ounce lighter than the one I had used for two years. For a month I had been getting sourer and sourer on my game, and the Locust Valley match was only a month off, and I couldn't seem to improve my delivery. Then Taddy Blessing suggested a lighter racket, and I chirked up. My racket *did* seem a bit heavy in my hand when I came to think of it, and all the tennis crowd were wild about the lighter-racket idea and made me think it was just what I needed. We had a lot of conferences, and some of the wisest heads in the country club got together, and the result was that we decided half an ounce was about what I needed to pare off my racket weight.

For a week I hardly slept, studying the thing out. It's a mighty important step for a man to take, changing the weight of his racket. Deciding what shade of tie to wear is nothing like as brain racking. And, after all, changing rackets didn't change my game. It was a terrible blow. I knew the fellows would feel fierce about it.

I was sitting there when Laura came

up. You know Laura? She's little and daff and as snappy as a whip. She reminds a chap of blue-white diamonds and coffee-colored lace—clean cut and sparkling and warm and soft. I've known her since we were kids, and she was always that way—always a little brown-and-pink beauty and as bossy as you please. One of the chaps that goes in for books said once that she was a good old standard work bound *de luxe*; about the finest thing possible on the bookshop table, but made to be a steady stand-by—carried around in the pocket as long as a man lives, and worn rough-edged, and treasured and loved — I was with him on the "loved" part. Loving Laura has always been my strong suit.

"'Lo, Jacky!" she said. "What's our worry? We look robin's-egg blue. Don't our new tie match our car seats?"

"Oh, quit it, Laura!" I said. "Don't kick a man when he's down. It's bad enough. I serve like a beginner."

"Bad as that?" she said. "New racket doesn't help, Jacky?"

"Nothing helps," I said. "I can't play tennis. I'm a rotter. I ought to resign. I couldn't play ping-pong. I'm a disgrace to the club."

"Poor Jacky!" she said, but she was laughing at me, and I knew it. She took the racket and weighed it in her hand. "Too heavy for me, or I'd make you give it to me," she said. "But cheer up, old boy—you're not so awful bad."

"Yes, I am," I said. "I know how bad. Ten years of tennis, and then—this! Laura, I'm going to chuck the game!"

"Horrors!" she said. "Why—why, Jacky! Why, what will you live for?"

"I know what I'll live for," I said. "I'm going to chuck the game and go to work or something, and get married."

"I say!" she said. "Really? Who is the lucky lady?"

"You are," I said. "Oh, stop laugh-

ing, can't you? Who else should I marry? I've meant to marry you all along, Laura, and you knew it. But a fellow can't muss up his game with love-making and that sort-of thing, can he? You know that. You know how a fellow that has a girl on his mind musses his game. Gets on his nerves and all of that. I've given the game a fair show, and I'm no good at all, and I'm going to chuck it."

"And marry me as a fill gap? Thankee, mum."

"And marry you," I said firmly.

"It's nice of you to think of me in—in this crisis, Jacky," she said. "You know I'm much obliged to you for thinking of me. But—"

"But what?" I asked.

"But it won't do," she said, shaking her head. "No, it won't do. It's a fine little plan, but it won't do." She hesitated, and then went on: "Of course you know I'm frightfully flattered by this—this thought of yours."

"Oh, stop it, Laura!" I half groaned, I fancy. "I'm in earnest."

"I know it, Jacky," she said, "but it won't do. There's one thing wrong with the plan. One thing! I'm not going to marry you."

"Oh, come, now!" I said. "That's a little bit of too much, Laura. That's not fair. No, by George! That's not fair! I've been meaning to marry you these last twenty years, ever since we were tots. I've been meaning it, and you knew it, and—there you are!"

She put her hand on my knee.

"Listen, Jacky," she said. "Of course I knew you would ask me to marry you some day. That's all right. Don't let that worry you. I knew it. But can't you see that that has nothing to do with my really marrying you?"

"Can't see it," I said. "I meant to ask you, and you knew I meant to, and you never so much as peeped, but just let me go along thinking that when I cut this tennis business—"

"Did you ever ask me before?" she asked.

"I should say not!" I said. "When they look to a chap to win all their club contests, he daren't fuss with girls. You know that, Laura."

"Yes, Jacky," she said, patting my knee, "and I know another thing. I'm not a filly some one has been raising and keeping just for you to come along and pick up when you were ready. I'm a girl, Jacky. I've had wooers."

"Oh, wooers! Piff!" I said, with disgust.

"Not that I liked any of them as well as I might have liked the right man," said Laura, "but they were better than none. Just not much better than none. I must be wooed before I am won, Jacky. I can't help it; it's how I am."

Of course that huffed me immediately. A chap can't think of a girl all his life, between games, and then have her talk like that, without being huffed. I struck the seat of the bench with the racket Laura had handed back to me, and made a dent in the racket that made it quite unreturnable to Higgins & Fitch.

"Well, I say!" I exclaimed. "That's a nice notion! I have to turn mushy and loll around you like a—like a *martinée* idol, have I? I have to do the lovey-dovey-doodles business, do I? If you're so strong on wooing, go marry one of your wooers. I'll not be mushy."

"And I don't want you to be," said Laura. "I don't want to sit in the moonlight and have you gurgle to me, Jacky. I don't like mushy men. That's why most of my wooers won't do. They—they're not primitive."

"Not which?" I asked.

"Primitive," she repeated. "They're not conquerors. They're not elemental. The men of the stone age didn't woo as they do."

"I dare say they didn't," I said.

"They were strong," said Laura, her eyes shining. "They were real men,



*Laura and Bobbie Loring were standing there, and Bobbie was showing her how he could pull small maple trees up by the roots.*

Jacky. The race is going to the—the dickens, because there are no more strong men. We must hark back, we must beat back to the elemental and the primitive and the strong. How do you suppose Taddy Blessing woos?"

"With a 'Bah Jove! Don't ye know!'" I said scornfully. "With a monocle and a cane. 'Dooood fond of ye, ye know!'"

"Right-o!" said Laura. "And how is that for a way to woo a girl who stroked her crew at college? How is that for a way to woo a girl who was the star first baseman at Palm Beach three seasons running? Pretty raw! Oh, we want real men! The man that wins me must come with a stone ax and knock me on the head and drag me home by the hair, like the good old cave men."

I looked at her with amazement, but she meant it. She's that sort, you know. Only I'm not that sort. I can't go about

knocking girls on the head with stone axes. I told her so.

"And your pater would have me up for abduction, and there'd be a jolly fine row, and your mother weeping all over the place. I'd look a nice chap, wouldn't I? Spread over the first page of a yellow: 'Westcote Tennis Champ Fractures Sweetheart's Skull. Girl's Father Has Him Arrested for Abduction. Long Prison Term in Sight for Jacky.' Nice, eh?"

"You needn't really fracture my skull," she said, rising. "You could use the edge of the tennis racket. You're so much stronger than I am. Jacky; you could just pick me up and carry me off in spite of my struggles. No matter how I scratched and bit, you could carry me off."

"Fancy!" I said.

"You needn't quite kill me," she said. "You could come in my car if you didn't want to drag me along the road.



You could drive the car to where I happened to be and jump out and throw me into the car, and, if I rebelled, you could beat me with a tennis racket until I was cowed."

"Fancy!" I said again.

"Bobbie Loring is willing to," she said suddenly, prodding her parasol tip into the sand. She lifted her eyes to see what I thought of that. It *was* something of a facer. He's a brute of a chap, is Bobbie; football and that sort of thing in college, and his only game is golf, to keep his weight down to abnormal.

"Did he say so?" I asked.

"Yes," said Laura brazenly. "I asked him, and he said he was willing to abduct from morn till night if he could have me. He said he would come with a stone ax and beat my brains out if he could have my littlest finger nail. He said he would grasp my hair and swing me over his shoulder and bear me away, shrieking. He said he would be willing to live in a cave and gnaw raw bones and wear skins of animals. He's almost primitive now, Jacky."

"All of that," I said coldly.

"So you see," said Laura, "feeling as I do about it, the least you can do, Jacky, is to abduct me."

I was tired of such nonsense. I turned my racket over in my hand and said nothing.

"Well?" Laura asked.

"If Bobbie Loring is the kind you fancy," I said, as carelessly as I could, "I can't help it if you fancy that kind. Wish you both joy, Laura."

"And you could abduct me so easily," said Laura pleadingly. "Just run onto me some time when I'm strolling, and stop the car, and——"

"I say!" I exclaimed briskly. "Do you suppose a racket half an ounce heavier would help my game, Laura?"

"——and just jump out of the car and overcome my resistance and throw me into the car," she went on. "Please,

Jacky, listen! And drive away at a frightful pace, and——"

"Hello!" I exclaimed. "There's Taddy at the clubhouse. If you're going that way, tell him to come here, will you, Laura? Tell him I've a notion half an ounce added to my racket——"

She tossed her chin and went. Silly little creature, to be sure, but one fine girl, for all that. No finer. Blue-white diamonds and coffee-colored—I said that, didn't I? But a man has to let a woman know he isn't quite to be walked on. Stone axes and abductions and all that nonsense!

I supposed she'd be running back in a day or two, but she didn't come. Next I saw of Laura was three days later, as I was cutting through the copse at the fourth hole of the golf course on my way home—car out of commission—and Laura and Bobbie Loring were standing there, and Bobbie was showing her how he could pull small maple trees up by the roots. Fancy a girl pretending to admire a thing like that! A horse can do it much easier; but who wants to marry a horse?

I tell you, it makes a chap cross to see the girl he's going to marry going around everywhere with another chap, and that was what Laura went in for. Everywhere I went I saw them, Bobbie and Laura, and my game went from bad to rotten. I felt quite wrathful about it. I stopped Laura on the path to the clubhouse and let her know how I felt.

"I don't see that it matters any to you, Jacky," she said, sweetly enough.

"Not matter?" I said. "Not matter when I'm going to marry you? Nice notion!"

"But you're not going to marry me, Jacky," she said coolly. "I'm not quite sure yet, but I think Bobbie is going to win me. I'm frightfully scared and eager and trembly, Jacky. He's made a club out of a young hickory tree, with a knob that big on the end, and he's found a place in New Jersey where

they'll marry us no matter how much foul play I show. They'll marry us as soon as I regain consciousness, if I'm knocked out during the abduction, Bobbie says. Of course, he may have to gag me to stop my screams. I'm so—so frightened and excited and—and trembly! I can't tell what minute he may spring upon me and bear me away."

"That big brute!" I said. "Have you put him up to any such nonsense? It's not safe, Laura. He's just idiot enough to take you at your word."

"He's just *man* enough to take me at my word!" said Laura. "He's just primitive and elemental enough to know how a woman wants to be wooed. If you had the slightest atavistic tendency, Jacky, you could beat back and—and woo me with a club."

"Never!" I said. "I'm a gentleman, I hope, and not a gorilla."

Laura turned and walked with me.

"Of course, I wouldn't expect you to be as muscular about it as Bobbie would be, Jacky," she said. "You could abduct me without the stone ax or the club, you know. You could come in a car, and just throw me into it—"

"And break your father's heart by the scandal it would cause?" I said.

"I see I'll have to let Bobbie half murder me," she said, with a sigh. "I'm afraid he'll be almost *too* rough, Jacky. He enters into things so heartily. You know you needn't throw me into the car very violently. Just lift me in, Jacky, and drive off, and *perhaps* gag my mouth, and drive to New Jersey—"

"Laura," I said, "*when* are you going to marry me?"

"You needn't even *lift* me into the car, Jacky," she said. "You can take me by the arm and *push* me into it, and perhaps I won't scream very loud."

"Before I would have to take a wife by main force—" I said. "Laura, if the woman I want to marry is not will-

ing to marry me gladly and of her own free will—"

"Jacky," she said pleadingly, "you needn't even gag me. I won't cry out at all. I'll be as quiet and good and obedient when you abduct me—"

"I'm not an abductor!" I said sternly.

"But listen, Jacky!" she urged, for we were at her gate now—only there is no gate, just the opening in the hedge. "Listen, Jacky! I couldn't love you and respect you if you didn't. I want my husband to be strong and ruthless and overpowering. I want him to be a primitive, Jacky. Listen, Jacky! We needn't go to New Jersey at all. I'm of age, and we could get a license at Long Island City, and arrange with a minister to be married quite respectably, after I was abducted, for I'd be quite cowed and fearful of you."

"No!" I said.

She stepped inside the hedge, and then she turned.

"Please, Jacky!" she urged. "Bobbie is so sure to carry me off, and—and I hate to disappoint a—a friend of my youth. If you just drove up in your car and *insisted* that I must get in and go at once to be married to you—"

"No! I'm not an abductor, Laura," I reiterated.

"But, Jacky, dear!" she begged. "If I let father and mother arrange everything about the wedding, and had bridesmaids and ushers and flower girls and everything, wouldn't you abduct me just the wee-est bit?"

"I am not an abduct—"

"Look, Jacky!" she said. "See! If I make a little line on the path, here, with the tip of my parasol, and I'm on this side, and you're on that side, and this side is my home and safety and my loving parents and all my memories and everything, wouldn't you just put out your hand and take mine and *pull* me across the line?"

"I am not an abduct—"



"Cave man," she cried, half laughing. "You ruthless cave man! Please, Jacky, you're hurting my wrist!"

"But, Jacky, dearest," she said, "if I came quite close to the line, and put out my hand like this, and leaned forward so the least little tiny pull would pull me across, wouldn't you abduct me then? Wouldn't you put out one little finger, maybe, and just pull me across the line?"

"Laura," I said severely, "I am not an abductor!"

"But, Jacky, if I happened to be straying from my father's cave and wandered *almost* out of sight of the

cave, and only my heels were on this side of the line, wouldn't you——"

"Not a pull!" I declared flatly. "I don't go in for this knock-down-and-drag-out business, Laura. No, by George, I'm no orang-utan, or whatever the blessed beast is! A fellow gets civilized in this day and age, and——"

"Ah, Jacky!" she begged. "If just a wee cobweb happened to catch on my cheek and blew toward you, wouldn't you take the tippest end of it in the very tips of your fingers and

*pretend* to give it the very least bit of a pull? Wouldn't you abduct me just that weenty bit?"

"By George, *no!*" I cried. "*No, no, no!*"

"Not if I ordered you to?"

"No!"

"Not even when Bobbie Loring is willing to break my head and drag me away to his lair by my hair and—and everything? You wouldn't lift your littlest finger to abduct me when I demand and order you to abduct me?"

"No!"

"Don't you want me, Jacky?" she asked, putting her hand on my arm and looking up into my face. It was getting dusky, you see, and she had to come rather close to see my face if she wanted to see it. "Don't you want me at all, Jacky, dear?"

"George, yes!" I said, and, as she was quite on my side of the line, I put my arm around her shoulders. She sighed quite happily, and snuggled, and it was all right with both of us; absolutely all right! It was just as I had always expected it would be. Presently she looked up into my face again. Her eyes were glad, and her whole face was glad.

"My cave man!" she said. "My dear old primitive, elemental Jacky cave man!"

"I say!" I exclaimed. "You came, you know; I didn't drag you."

"Of course you didn't!" she cried. "And that's why you are so splendid, Jacky, boy. Don't you *see*? You stupid old elemental, primitive Jacky cave man, don't you see? You just wouldn't and *wouldn't* let me boss you, Jacky. You were just as rude and stubborn and high-handed as you could be. You were so splendidly cave mannish, Jacky!"

"Fancy!" I exclaimed. "And how about old Bobbie and his stone ax and all that sort of thing?"

"Bobbie?" she cried, with the great-

est scorn. "That mollicoddle? Do you think I would marry a—a person like Bobbie? Why, all a girl has to *do*, Jacky, is to *ask* Bobbie to stone ax her and he just grovels with stone axes. All a girl has to do is to suggest it and he just comes bleating and ready to drag her away by the hair of her head. But you, you splendid cave man!"

Fancy! Me a cave man! Queer notions these girls get, what?

But, "Have it your own way," I said. "And now we'll trot up to the house and tell your mater we're to be married."

"Oh, please, Jacky, not so soon!" she said. "Let's just be secretly engaged for a while. For a month——"

"Come," I said.

"Just for a week, Jacky."

"Come!" I said. "We're civilized beings, I hope. We'll tell your mater."

"Just secretly engaged until to-morrow, Jacky!" she begged.

I saw she wasn't coming, so I took her by the wrist and fairly dragged her into the yard and up the path. A chap has to heed the conventions in this day and age. A fellow has to do the proper or he might as well be living in the Dark Ages, as I see it. We're not cave men, I hope. So I dragged her along, and she held back; but, George! she seemed happy about it.

"Cave man," she cried, half laughing. "You ruthless cave man! Please, Jacky, you're hurting my wrist! Please, Jacky, not so fast! Please—I'll come nicely."

So she did, and we stopped in the shadow of the veranda a minute, and then we went in to her mater, Laura fixing her hair as we went.

That's all. Or, no, by George! I almost forgot the moral. It's all rot about being in love spoiling a chap's game. I won the Locust Valley cup. I couldn't help but win it, I was feeling so jolly fit, you know.



"Mis' Toomey, she calla me de cheat—me—Car-  
bonetti—me, de cheat!"

## Capulet and Montague in Toomey's Court

By Anne O'Hagan

Author of "The Legacy," "A Gift of Christmas," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY CLARENCE ROWE

MRS. TOOMEY, relict of the late Michael, came slowly up the stairs of her little brick house, the first on Toomey's Court after one had turned from the great thoroughfare of Bleeker Street into the blind cul-de-sac that celebrated the name of Mrs. Toomey's departed husband. Very slowly she climbed the neat little brown-stone flight between the neat, iron rails.

Her pace was not usually deliberate, despite the ever-increasing tightness of her old-fashioned, close-fitting sealskin coat. Mrs. Toomey was of a spirit which scorned to yield an inch to the encroachments of the flesh, and though the pleasing roundness of her earlier years had passed through the stoutness of a matronly maturity and was now verging upon the puffiness of a fast-nearing



fifty, she had never accommodated her steps to the demands of *avoirdufois*. It was only weariness and discouragement that could cause her to move thus slowly.

Suddenly conscious—through the sensitive tendrils of the faded geraniums in her old black bonnet, it seemed—of the eyes directed upon her slow ascent to her dwelling from Giovanni's shoe shop across the street, she mended her pace and took the last three steps at a trot. She disdained to cast even a side glance toward her enemy's stronghold as she inserted the key into the lock of the ancient door, with its knob and its knocker as glistening as daily applications of brass paste and of Mrs. Toomey's favorite polisher, elbow grease, could make them. Yet she was aware of the black eyes upon her, and she had sufficient belief in the power of thought to hold that Giovanni was aware of the gesture made toward him by her indomitable spirit, so to speak. That gesture would have been physically expressed by a shake of the fist and a defiant thumb raised to Mrs. Toomey's small, buttony nose. Her spirit was still primitive, though years and their wisdom had modified its manifestations.

Once she was safe within the refuge of her own four walls, she allowed her courage and her figure to sag. Against the drab paper of the hall—gray and gilt where it was patched, but a monotone of age and dinginess elsewhere—stood a golden-oak hat-and-umbrella stand. There was a settee between the two umbrella pits, and upon that Mrs. Toomey sank, her plump, rosy face rather ashen in the dim light, her mouth drooping. A heavy sigh shook her. Unseeing she gazed at the closed door of what might have been the parlor in the house of a lady in less straitened circumstances, but was in Mrs. Toomey's the most expensive of her lodging apartments.

Never during the fifteen hard years

since Toomey's taking off had the sign "Room to Let" been pasted in inconspicuous but unmistakable invitation upon the brick wall outside, in regard to that room, for more than a day at a time. Never had it been pasted at all during the past six years, since Mr. Gilroy, of Ruthven's, had taken up his abode in it. It was a large apartment, designed by Mrs. Toomey for the shelter of two "single gents,"—at eight dollars a week; but whenever destiny had, during six years, snatched Mr. Gilroy's companion from him by the clutch of matrimony or of great impecuniosity, he had cheerfully paid the entire eight dollars himself until he had either himself discovered, at Ruthven's, a young man worthy of Mrs. Toomey, or until she had effected a rearrangement of lodgers.

Gradually, across the almost sodden gloom of her reflections as she sat upon the golden-oak settee, the door of the best room obtruded itself. No dust lurked in its crevices, no finger marks bedaubed the neighborhood of its white china knob. Twice a year all the white woodwork in Mrs. Toomey's received a cleaning that threatened to remove the paint from its surface; once a month it received a washing of less vigorous, though thorough, sort; and every day, except Sunday, Christmas, and Good Friday, it was dusted. A faint gleam of housewifely pride lit her somber eyes as she gazed upon the monument to her unaided industry, but it faded quickly, chased away by a sigh, as a wind drives the sunset light from the sky.

Was it for this she had wrought? Was it for this she had worked her fingers to the bone—to see Rose Toomey in happy converse with her congenital enemy, Joe Carbonetti, son of Giovanni, the shoemaker of Toomey's Court? Shoemaker? The autocrat, the money king, the money lender!

"The ould divil!" cried Mrs. Toomey, reverting to the dialect of an earlier day. "But wait till I get me two hands

on ye, Rose Toomey! It's not so much like a gawp ye'll be lookin' then—not strollin' an' streelin' wid a silly smile on yer face an' yer eyes cast down like a sheep's." Mrs. Toomey had no exact knowledge as to the optic habits of sheep, but she seldom allowed lack of exact information to stand in the way of turning a phrase. "Och, but I'll take it out of ye, me leddy gay!"

But though she talked thus stalwartly to the clean door of Mr. Gilroy's room, her heart had its misgivings. When had she last punished Rose? When had she last given that delight of all her days even a tongue-lashing? And now that Rose was an independent woman, earning her six dollars a week in Ruthven's, how would she bear coercion? But Joe Carbonetti! The thing was unbelievable!

"A guinea!" said Mrs. Toomey solemnly to herself, as one who plumbs the depths of ignominy. And then, having looked her shame full in the face, she arose and went, heavy-footed, heavy-hearted, to her own region of the house—hers and Rose's. In the low, irregular attic rooms beneath the roof, they had their sleeping quarters. The lower floors were given over to the lodgers, except the basement, where the Toomeys cooked and ate—and lived.

From her room upstairs, Mrs. Toomey glanced through to Rose's room, as she laid away her bonnet and her warm sealskin—that magnificent relic of poor Michael's brief day of prosperity. She had looked into it a million times since she had been left alone with the little five-year-old, and the grim problem of sustaining them both, and always with a quick upwelling of love and devotion. Even to-day, after so many years had passed, she could see, here and there, in Rose's room, things she had managed to buy for the child Rose—foolish china ornaments for the mantel, the row of flowerpots for the broad sills of the dormer windows. On the bed was the

quilt, faded now, she had made of bright scraps of calico in the shape of stars.

The girl herself, even since she had come to earning age, had made few contributions to the adornment of her own room; she bought "things for the house" with her hoarded dollars—towels for the towel-consuming lodgers, pillow slips, oilcloth, and the like. But to-day Mrs. Toomey spied something that she herself assuredly had not bought, and that she more than suspected Rose had never purchased for herself—three red roses, short-stemmed, to be sure, and stiff in their sweetness—but roses! Roses in November! Mrs. Toomey's face hardened.

"His father's son ought to be able to afford them," she said bitterly, as she marched into Rose's room and seized the poor blossoms ruthlessly. "What he robbed yer own father of would keep ye in roses for a long time! But it's the last ye'll see of these." She opened the little window and threw them down into the court. "I wish they might scratch his eyes out, the guinea!" she said vindictively, squeezing her thumb of a drop of blood which a thorn had brought to her work-hardened skin.

The grievance that Mrs. Toomey had against Giovanni Carbonetti was of the sort not infrequently bequeathed by gentlemen of easy-going social and bibulous habits to their widows in regard to other gentlemen of quite other temperaments. Michael Toomey had been lucky during his early days in the country. He had prospered at his trade of plumbing until he had had a small shop of his own around the corner in Bleeker Street, and until he actually held title—a somewhat conditional one, to be sure—to the neat little house at the corner.

But Michael had loved to spend freely the money that came to him rather freely. He had set up a good, brisk little mare to drive about to his



*Yet she was aware of the black eyes upon her.*

jobs; he had replaced the pipe of his earlier period with fat, brown, silver-banded cigars. He had bought Lizzie a sealskin coat. Of course, he had heartily

despised the "dagos" and "guineas" who swarmed into the neighborhood. He had resented their intrusion; he had had a fine racial disdain for them. Their

spaghetti and dark-hued bread, their garlic and their thin, sour wine, were themes that prompted him to lordly jest as he sat over his own juicy steaks and his glass—his ever-growing number of glasses—of whisky and water.

And by and by it had befallen him to find himself, through the transfer of certain mortgages and notes, the debtor of the shoemaker of the opposite cellar. The shoemaker had not aspired to clothe his wife in sealskin or to drive about his business behind a smart little mare: Michael had been accustomed to throw him lordly dimes and nickels when he paid for the half soling of his boots. It had been a terrible blow to the poor man's pride when the failure and death of his friend Casey, the attorney of the Market Court, had revealed the fact that he had been tossing nickels to the person who practically owned much that Michael flaunted so happily in the face of the world!

"'Twas that that killed Mike," Mrs. Toomey used to declare in confidential moments to her friends. "The doctors might call it pneumonia an' hint their hints about Mike's glass of toddy—chronic alcoholism was the name they were givin' it—but I know what killed him. 'Twas findin' himself beholden to the guinea."

Poor Lizzie Toomey herself had struggled out of that position by a rather expensive process. Spurred thereto by wifely pride and by Attorney Casey's successor, she had contested the Italian's claims against her husband's estate, and for a time feeling had run so high in Toomey's Court that the very infants playing in the gutters had been divided into Toomey and Carbonetti bands, the division being strictly racial in its lines.

She had lost her contest, of course. The shoemaker's case had been perfectly valid. And the real undying enmity between the clans had dated from the day when, in the lawyer's

office, the poor widow had signed away her interests in the plumbing establishment to satisfy the indebtedness to Mr. Carbonetti, and he had said to her:

"Me no press Mis' Toomey. Mis' Toomey, she starta, she sue-a. Mis' Toomey, she calla me de cheat—me—Carbonetti—me, de cheat!" And he had struck his breast with a gesture which seemed to intimate that pride of race burned there as hotly as in the broad bosom beneath the sealskin jacket.

Mrs. Toomey had, of course, replied, prefacing her remarks with the inconsistent statement that she would not be demeanin' herself to answer the likes of him. And it had taken the utmost endeavor of Attorney Casey's successor to bring the conference of adjudication to a close without sending for the Jefferson Market Court reserves to quell the riot.

Her friends had advised Mrs. Toomey to sell the house in which, after the settlement of Michael's estate, she still had a majority equity—just the amount of equity that kept her always worried about her taxes, her interest, and her repairs. But she had replied with spirit: "An' have the guinea think he drove me out? Ye don't know Lizzie Toomey!"

And so for fifteen years she had lived in the little old place which poor Michael had bought with such swelling pride of land proprietorship; and for fifteen years she had labored valorously to "keep the place decent," with a success that only the deteriorating character of the neighborhood had made uncertain. And daily she had cast eyes of disdain upon Carbonetti, making and mending shoes in his basement as industriously as if he did not own the entire tenement above him—"the ould skinfint!" And daily and hourly she had loved Rose and had labored "to make a leddy of her" in spite of the difficulties that the environment put in

her way. And all for this—that she should see Rose looking down before the dark eyes that Joe Carbonetti bent upon her!

"Wirra, wirra!" wailed Mrs. Toomey, suddenly enveloping her dishonored head in her blue-checked apron. "Wirra, wirra! An' wid Gilroy lookin' at her the way he does, too!"

Then, being, after all, a practical person, she uncovered her head and went down to the kitchen to prepare the lamb stew against Rose's homecoming. Rose, by the way, had been late several evenings now. Well, her mother was prepared to dissect her explanations of that accident, should it occur again.

The gas had been blazing brightly for twenty minutes above the cheerful little basement dining table before Mrs. Toomey heard, from the top of the basement stairs, her daughter's fluting "Mother!" That meant that it was already five minutes past seven. The theory of dining was that it was a ten or twelve-minute walk from Ruthven's to Toomey's Court, and that Rose should therefore arrive home by half past six at the latest. Fifteen minutes were allowed her to rest after the fatigues of a day at Ruthven's toilet counter, and by a quarter of seven it was expected that she should be seated, somewhat in dishabille as to slippers and collar, exclaiming happily over the savory supper odors, and protesting half-heartedly against the clucking-hen ministrations of her mother. And tonight it was after seven when that lovely call of hers floated down the narrow black stairway.

"I'm here," replied Mrs. Toomey briefly.

"I'm late," said Rose from the darkness: "I won't keep you waiting another minute. I'll come as I—" She appeared, blinking in the light.

"Rose Toomey, go upstairs this minute an' take them stiff shoes off yer

feet, an' give them a good rub wid alcohol, an' fresh stockin's an' slippers!" interrupted Mrs. Toomey sternly. "It ain't by neglectin' yer health that ye'll save time."

Rose's glance, shy, long-lashed, and darkly gray, fluttered upon her mother's stern, set face for a second. Then it fell.

"I'm not tired," she said softly. "I can do those things after supper—"

"Ye'll do them now!" stated the head of the family succinctly, and Rose vanished. Mrs. Toomey breathed a sigh of relief. Evidently her command had not yet lost its power; she had been positively afraid of the girl's first act of disobedience, however trifling.

In a few minutes Rose was back, slippered, wrapped, her face pink from the freshening bowl of water into which it had been dipped. The big tureen of stew steamed odorously before Mrs. Toomey's place at the head of the table; the plate of biscuits, marvels of delicate brown, stood between her and Rose, easy for each to reach.

"Though they're hard an' could as brickbats, thanks to standin' this hour," grumbled Mrs. Toomey. And on the marble slab of the sideboard, reflected in the glistening mirror beneath the marvelous carving of deer heads and grapevines that adorned it, a great chocolate cake reared itself in promise of dessert.

But never was more completely illustrated the theory of the perturbed immortal spirit's inability to take comfort in mere material joys. Mrs. Toomey, gloomy and taciturn, made but a pretense of eating her favorite dish; and Rose, sensitive to atmosphere as perhaps only the guilty are ever sensitive, talked so much and so fast that she had no time to eat. With much detail she described the events of the day in the toilet-goods department—the fierce bargain rush for the near-seal toilet bags advertised on Sunday, the





"D'ye think anny of the Egetalian girls will be prettier dressed, Mr. Gilroy?" inquired the mother.

fining of Miss de Vere for tardiness and her superb exit from the store after that act had placed her upon a common plane with all the rest of the girls.

"Did ye see Mr. Gilroy to-day?" Her mother, who had listened to the tales with a phenomenal lack of comment, interrupted their flow.

Rose started.

"Why, no; not that I remember," she said.

"Humph!" was Mrs. Toomey's comment. And then suddenly she let fly the arrow of question that Rose had been dreading and trying to ward off: "What kept ye so late?"

The girl had endeavored to have in

readiness for this moment a lie so perfect as to protect her perfectly, but now that the moment to use it had arrived, she discovered how much more than words are needed for successful prevarication. For though she said: "Lena Oeschlager is sick and the girls asked me to stop in and see her," and though this statement represented a fact, yet flaming cheeks, abashed eyes, and a toneless voice gave announcement of how much less than true the sentence was.

Again Mrs. Toomey cleared her throat with that rasping "Humph!" and again Rose awaited her doom. It came at last. Her mother had overestimated her own powers of diplomatic

reserve and indirection. The suspicion she had intended Rose to involve herself in came suddenly out.

"An' did Joe Carbonetti go to Lena Oeschlager's wid ye?"

One flying, frightened glance at her mother's face Rose permitted herself. Then she looked steadily at the biscuit dough she was kneading between thumb and forefinger.

"He waited outside for me," she answered sullenly. How, how had her mother learned the truth? Who had spoken? Had Mr. Gilroy seen them together and treacherously reported the matter—Mr. Gilroy who had been so kind to her, who had obtained her place in Ruthven's for her when, three years ago, a brief experience as stenographer in a certain dingy, evil, little office had left her with a shuddering determination never again to work except among a crowd of friendly women? Could Gilroy, the rock of their precarious and pitiful prosperity, have been the traitor?

"So!" cried Mrs. Toomey, the vials of her wrath uncorked by this admission, and yet a sort of peace descending upon her like a balm because she could still trust Rose's word. "So! This is the way ye honor yer father's memory! This is the way ye pay me for what I've done for ye, slavin' for ye early an' late, denyin' meself, killin' meself——"

"But what have I done?" Rose raised her voice to drown her mother's lamentations.

"Done! That's a fine question! Didn't I see ye, wid me own two eyes, walkin' the streets wid the guinea when ye should have been eatin' yer lunch? A guinea! Have ye no pride? No shame?"

"He's an American," said Rose obstinately. "Just as much an American as I am!"

"Oh, he's told ye that fine tale, has he? An American! He lives like one, don't he? Rose, me girl, mark what

I'm tellin' ye now—an Irishman's more than a half an American before he ever sets foot on the shore of the country, an' a guinea's three-quarters Eyetalian when he's been born here an' his father before him! But there's no need to go into that. If they was Irish—them Carbonettis, which God forbid there should ever be anny Irish like them!—an' had treated yer father the dirthy way they did, ye should hold yerself disgraced to see them on the street, let alone to be colloquin' an' colleaguin' wid them. Where did ye first pick up acquaintance wid this Joe?"

"At the fair for St. Joseph's," murmured Rose. A look of obstinacy was settling on her soft, round young face.

"Three weeks ago," calculated Mrs. Toomey aloud. "An' to-day ye're as thick as thieves wid him!—Have ye no shame about ye at all, at all? Are ye so hard pressed for company that ye've got to take up wid thieves, an' robbers, an' dagos av that——"

"Oh, mother! I haven't taken up with any one. If I happen to see a gentleman I know in the street, ain't I to speak to him?"

"A gentleman ye know! God save the common men if Joe Carbonetti's a gentleman! An' ye 'happen' to see him on the streets—mornin', noon, an' night ye 'happen' to see him! Talk sense, if ye can, Rose Toomey! Ye don't 'happen' to see Mr. Gilroy, a gentleman, indeed, if ever there was one! An' a friend to ye an' to me! Him that got ye yer place, a good place in a decent store where ye wouldn't be insulted——"

"Mother!" Rose's voice was a prayer to be spared hideous recollections of dimly comprehended danger.

"Oh, no! Ye don't 'happen' to see Mr. Gilroy! But Joe Carbonetti, that killed yer father an' robbed yer mother——"

"Mother, it wasn't Joe! An' father

died of pneumonia; an' Lawyer Tone says you—you—you——"

"Says I what?" repeated Mrs. Toomey, with ominous, significant calm.

"Says," repeated Rose, desperately brave, "that you didn't have a—a leg to stand on in that suit against old Carbonetti; that father had really signed all those notes and things——"

"An' when did Lawyer Tone tell ye all this?"

"It wasn't me he told," Rose confessed.

"Then who did he tell?"

"Joe Carbonetti." Her voice was a whisper.

For a second Mrs. Toomey's plump, frosty-apple of a face, designed by nature to express only the cheeriest of emotions, was apoplectic with passion. When she recovered sufficient breath to speak she said:

"Go to yer room, ye thankless, bad girl! Go to yer room, ye unnatural daughter that ud take the word of her father's enemy an' her mother's against her mother's own word! Go to yer room, an' never let me know of yer speakin' to that black-hearted heathen again. If ever ye do speak to him again, out of this house ye go, miss!"

Rose stood up, swaying slightly. Never before had her mother spoken violently to her. Even in her naughty, mischievous childhood, the quick, sharp scoldings she had received, the stinging, salutary slaps, had never seemed angry. But now anger had made her mother's features almost unrecognizable, anger and implacable—hatred, could it be? She trembled, but for all her consternation in the midst of this unknown storm, some new force was born in her. Injustice breeds rebels—sinuous, plotting ones, or fervent, daring ones. Rose felt in herself possibilities of being both sorts.

"You have no right to talk to me so!" she cried shakily. "No right, no

right at all! I'm twenty years old. I've always obeyed you and worked for you. I have a right to my opinions and—and—to my friends——"

"Go before I forget myself!" cried Mrs. Toomey, half rising, and Rose fled.

It is a wise victor who does not seek to probe at once the extent of his triumph. Mrs. Toomey possessed this instinctive wisdom. She did not question Rose each day after this conversation, so memorable to them both, so subversive of their whole simple, comfortable, affectionate way of life. Rose came home early each night from Ruthven's and ate, rather unappreciatively, the dainties that her mother, with an aching heart, labored to prepare. She did not go out again until it was time to go to Ruthven's in the morning. She negatived all her mother's suggestions as to evening amusements. She was "too tired" for the movies; she "didn't feel like" the dance of her club at the neighborhood settlement; she wasn't going to go any more to the meetings of her sodality at the church. She read a good deal out of library books after the dinner things were cleared away, and the substitution of a red cloth for the white had converted the dining room into a sitting room.

The evenings, however, when Mr. Gilroy's tread sounded down the black basement stairs, and his pleasant, grizzled face, with the kind eyes shining behind his glasses, showed itself in the doorway, she made an excuse for an early escape from the room. Her mother used to watch her exits moodily, but not even the new and dreadful suspicion that Mrs. Toomey had implanted in Rose's heart as to Mr. Gilroy's intentions could make her read any other expression into his mild, beaming regard than the familiar one of paternal indulgence.

One night as they sat alone together, about a week after the Carbonetti storm



*Harance Roma*

"Eef eet ware me," the older man assented, "I could go to de door. Bah! I would nevaire be afraid one cross ole woman!"

had broken, Mrs. Toomey remarked conversationally:

"Mr. Gilroy's been raised again."

"Has he?" said Rose indifferently.

"Yes. He's assistant buyer now. He'll be goin' to Europe his twice a year regular after this—" The wistfulness of a child, reading a fairy story, tinged her voice.

"I'm sure I can spare him," said Rose flippantly, as she settled herself with her book. Her mother seemed oblivious of the unsympathetic reply.

"To Venice, where the canals are; an' here an' there in Switzerland, wid the Alps. Stoppin' at the best places, an' waited upon like a lord— Ruthven's can afford it!"

"I wish they could afford to give me a little more, then!"

"It's wonderful, the likes of him stayin' on in a place like this so many years," ruminated her mother. "He was only a clerk when he come here—but well paid, even then. Not many earnin' what he earns would have lived here, cheap an' careful. He's taken the front room for himself from now on. I must move young Walters, an' get the extra bed out to-morrow. He's satisfied. He says he wouldn't feel at home elsewhere. He's savin'. He says he'll retire at fifty-five an' live in the country. That's what he's savin' for."

"He won't have long to wait," commented Rose, turning a page noisily.

"Rose Toomey! He's in the very prime of life!"

Rose laughed. The prime of life means something to twenty quite other than what it means to forty-eight. She made no other reply to her mother than that impertinent giggle, which incensed the good woman. There was, of course, no use in attacking Rose upon the subject of age; but attack was still possible! She knew a way to "put the child in her place!"

"I hope," she said darkly, "that ye haven't forgotten me warnin' to ye the other night. I hope ye're leavin' Joe Carbonetti alone. If ye ain't, an' if I find ye out—remember what I've said!"

Rose raised her eyes from the book and let them rest rather insolently upon her mother's face. The week had changed her—had hardened her or at least incased her in a shell of hardness to protect the suffering tenderness within her.

"You needn't worry about Joe Carbonetti," she said. "His father would no more let him have anything to do with me than if I were the dirt under his feet."

"What!" cried Mrs. Toomey after the full significance of the statement had penetrated to her mind. "What! That shoe-makin' dago—an' yer father drove his own horse!"

"Well," said Rose cruelly, untouched by the pride of past grandeur, "that doesn't cut any ice with old Carbonetti. He says"—she closed her book and spoke with great distinctness—"that we are dirty, tricky Irish; that he is a Roman—not a Neapolitan, not a Sicilian, but a Roman; and that he'd kill Joe sooner than see him keeping company with me!" The words rolled out with a sort of vindictive satisfaction. Rose had reached the wonderful place in life where another's pride of race is a source of pride.

Mrs. Toomey, breathing heavily, looked unbelievably at her.

"I can't credit me ears!" she declared. "Look at the way he lives! Look at his cellar shop! Look at that narrer, little tenement—an' we ownin' this house! An' you kept at school to sixteen——"

"Joe's father says," repeated Rose as one who recites a lesson, "that the house he lives in is his own, an' not another man's on a mortgage. An' that I'm not fit for Joe to associate with. Joe's been to City College—Joe is highly educated."

"The impudence of him! The brazen impudence!" Mrs. Toomey was still considering the older Carbonetti, not the acquisitions of the younger one. "But," suddenly, "how come you to know what he says?"

Rose paled, and then flushed.

"Joe told me," she said. She waited for the thunderbolt to fall.

"When?"

"The day after—the day after you said I mustn't see him any more."

There was a long silence. But the greater wrong, the greater insult to authority, to patent superiority, had dwarfed the less. Rose's acknowledged disobedience loomed but a slight thing against the background of Carbonetti's colossal presumption.

"Never in all me days have I heard aught to equal it!" declared Mrs. Toomey. "Never! This government is far too easy, lettin' in foreign riffraff the way it does! I don't know at all, at all, where we'll come to. An' so Dago Joe is too good to keep company wid Michael Toomey's daughter! Well, well, well! Ye don't say! An' he told ye himself—to explain why he couldn't be hangin' around Ruthven's of an evenin', I suppose, an' buyin' ye little sticks of red roses!"

Rose started guiltily, and felt a soft, little protuberance in the baggy fullness of her silk blouse. Feeling it, she looked more peaceful.

"No'm," she answered, with some-



thing approaching her old gleam of railery as she looked at her mother; "no'm, that wasn't why he told me what his father said."

"Why, then?"

"He told me," said Rose, a little tremulously, "after I had told him I couldn't walk any more with him because you had forbidden me; because you didn't think Eytalians were high enough for us; and because you had always been so good a mother, and father both, to me that I couldn't disobey you. Why, then, Joe told me about his father so as to show me that it was all nonsense, and just old folks' way of seeing things!" She ended her jumbled explanation out of breath. Her mother stared at her hard.

"The impidence!" she murmured finally. But whether she referred to the old or to the young man—or even to her own daughter—was not apparent. At last she spoke again. "Have ye seen him since?"

"A person can't help seeing another person when they're on the same street," Rose defended herself. "But I haven't walked with him; truly I haven't, mother." She blushed and thrilled at the thought of a tall, slim young figure leaning each morning and evening against an iron rail around the corner, and laying, each evening, a red rose on a gatepost as she came.

"Huh! He hasn't asked ye to, I guess—afraid of his father!"

"He has, too!" flashed Rose. "He has, too! But I"—she dimpled—"I'm afraid of my mother!"

"Ye baggage!" said Mrs. Toomey, with an ill-repressed smile; and felt more at one with life than for a week. "But tell me," she went on, "where this Roman, this grand Roman gentleman, expects his son to find a wife suitable to his rank—the dago shoemaker!"

"Oh, old Mr. Carbonetti wants Joe to go back home for his wife. You

see, mother, Joe's very highly educated. He's still going to college, taking"—she spoke importantly—"postgraduate work. He's goin' to be a professor himself—of Romance languages." She rolled the words beneath her tongue. "And with all that education and all their money—old Carbonetti's awfully rich; he's partner in an Italian bank and an Italian importing business—why, he wants Joe to go back home for a wife. He could marry a countess or anybody like that."

Her mother laughed harshly. "How d'ye think the countess—God bless the impidence of the people!—would like the tenement? Now wouldn't it make ye sick to hear the likes of them givin' themselves airs? An' this fine feller, Joe—does he see all the countesses in Italy waitin' for him to come an' drop the handkerchief?"

Rose shook her head, faintly smiling. Then she said: "He wants me to go to the Christmas ball of the Sons of Garibaldi with him, mother—just to show his father, you know, that he—he—can't be bullied!"

"A dago dance!" commented Mrs. Toomey, but with less asperity than might have been expected.

"It's very select. All invitations—no tickets for sale," enlarged Rose. "His father wants him to take Miss Palisi. Her father's in the Italian consul's office."

"Oh, he does, does he?" snarled Mrs. Toomey. "Well, if I let ye go, this once—to spite the old man, mind ye!—ye'll not let it go anny further? I've yer word for that?"

"Oh, mother!" cried Rose in great jubilation. "Of course not! We're only friends. And there's some perfectly lovely blue, dotted, silk-finished voile at Ruthven's going on sale to-morrow. Do you think we could finish it in time?"

It was finished in time, and Rose

showed herself in it to her mother and Mr. Gilroy in the basement dining room. They looked at her proudly.

"D'ye think anny of the Eyetalian girls will be prettier dressed, Mr. Gilroy?" inquired the mother. Mr. Gilroy opined not. "Now pin up the skirt, Rosie, so's not to dirty it, an' put on yer long black coat. Oh, but I hope old Carbonetti'll hear of this before the shutters is off his shop to-morrow mornin'!"

"He'll hear of it, never fear!" Mr. Gilroy assured her.

"The impiddence of him!" went on Mrs. Toomey. "Darin' to say who Michael Toomey's daughter shall go wid an' who she shall not! For that's what it comes to, when all is said an' done."

"Exactly," agreed Mr. Gilroy.

"Now, mind ye, Rose—home by one o'clock, an' no philanderin'!"

"Yes'm," said Rose, tying a green veil over her brown hair and looking like a half-sheathed bud of her own name flower.

"I don't like this meetin' him around the corner," reflected the mother.

"Oh, but, mother! If Mr. Carbonetti saw him coming here and made a fuss and maybe stopped him——"

"I'll take her as far as the corner," offered Mr. Gilroy.

"Well!" Mrs. Toomey gave grudging consent, and the area door closed upon them.

Meanwhile, on Bleeker Street, a carriage waited, and beside it Mr. Carbonetti and his son Joe exchanged a few words.

"Eef eet ware me," the older man assented, "I vould go to de door. I vould no sneak aroun' de corna. Bah! I vould nevaire be afraid one cross ole voman!"

"Yes, but, papa, if Mrs. Toomey kept Rose at home it would be very awkward. And she would never let her go to a dance with me. She wants her

to marry that Gilroy that's lived there so long. He's rich—he's one of the silent partners in Ruthven's. And Mrs. Toomey hates us, anyway."

"Bah!" Old Carbonetti spat into the gutter with great expression. "Dat voman! Dat defil!"

"You'd better get in, papa, or Rose may see you. Thanks for bringing Guiseppa's cab around." And at the suggestion old Carbonetti shuffled around the corner in time to see, on the other side of the street, Rose come out in the convoy of Mr. Gilroy. He chuckled with rich satisfaction to think how he was thwarting his old enemy.

"Can no go out veet Joel!" he repeated to himself. "Ah, *non, non!* Ah, but *si, si!*" He nodded his head emphatically in the direction of the neat little brick house. "But *si, si—yes!*" he exploded.

The path of true love, thus uncovered by fate and finesse, the young persons walked, each secure in parental concurrence. Old Carbonetti had no shadow of desire for Rose as a daughter-in-law, but stronger than natural antipathy to one of her name was the exquisite joy of outwitting the woman who had challenged his honesty in open court, the woman who had so unmistakably displayed her distrust of him years ago. Mrs. Toomey did not desire a "dago" son-in-law, but not for an instant could she permit old Carbonetti to think that his will prevailed in the limitation of Rose's admirers.

What she secretly longed for was that Rose would lead Joe on to great expectations and then finally flout him with a disdainful laugh—and that old Carbonetti would somehow hear the laugh. But as the situation unfolded itself, she had only the day-by-day satisfaction of knowing that Joe was disobeying fatherly injunctions in regard to Rose; and old Carbonetti, with hopes that matched her own, had the same satisfaction of knowing that his old en-

emy's commands to her daughter had not withstood Joe's triumphant charm. And by and by, in nets of their own weaving, the two were completely enmeshed.

It was New Year's week when Joe managed to convey to his father the impression that Rose was to be married, willy-nilly, to Mr. Gilroy, in order to break up the now discovered romance between himself and Rose.

"Bah!" said old Carbonetti, waxing a thread to sew his leather. "Bah, for Gilroy an' de ole voman! Ronn away veet Rose—ronn away! Marry her."

Joe seemed dazzled to timidity by this prospect, but finally allowed himself to be persuaded to try it. Would his father arrange with Father Anselm at St. Joseph's for the sacramental ceremony, while he, Joe, and Rose went to city hall for the license? Time pressed—danger threatened.

And across the street Mrs. Toomey was tying on the bonnet with the faded geranium trimming, and was donning the ancient sealskin jacket, preparatory to accompanying her daughter and Joe to city hall. Haste was necessary—time pressed; dimly comprehended dangers threatened from old Carbonetti. Mrs. Toomey compressed her lips. She would like to see that old devil interfering with even the least of the desires of her daughter!

To Mr. Gilroy that night, as she sat alone with him in the new solitude of the dining room, she expressed a misgiving that had come to her.

"They've gone to Niagara Falls," she said, divided between pride in this brilliant wedding journey and the desolation of separation from Rose. "To Niagara Falls. An' what I'm puzzlin' over is this—where would he be gettin' the money for such a trip as that except from his father? 'Tis not till next year he'll be teachin' them Romance languages Rose is talkin' about. An'

if his father has given him the money—an' I thought I saw him outside the rectory— Man, do ye think they've hoodwinked me, the pair of them?"

"Well," said Mr. Gilroy, twinkling behind his glasses, "if they have, 'twas no more than you might have expected, opposing nature as you started out to do. And—don't look so about it, Lizzie Toomey, dear. If they've hoodwinked you, be sure they've hoodwinked old Carbonetti, too. And if you'd consent to Rose's marrying to spite an old man you dislike, surely you'd consent to her marrying for her own happiness?"

"You're a good man, Gilroy," said Mrs. Toomey slowly. "But it goes against the grain—"

"I'm glad you think I'm a good man," said Mr. Gilroy. "For, if you really think I am, we may give the young people a bit of a surprise in our turn. What do you say to another wedding, Lizzie, and another wedding journey—to Venice where the canals are?"

"You're meanin' me?" she gasped.

"Who else?"

"But—but—I thought ye'd an eye to Rosie," she blurted out.

"To Rosie! Tush, woman, dear! What would a man like me want with a chick? It's a woman in the prime of life—it's you that I've thought of these many months now. But while you had Rose, I knew you would never think of me, and so— Will you, Lizzie?"

"Venice—where the canals are! The spalpeens—playing their tricks on me! Sure ye're a good man, Gilroy; an' though I never thought to replace Michael—no, nor don't—"

"I understand, Lizzie. I, too— Ah, we are both in the prime of life, and much lies behind us. But there's something left, Lizzie."

She laid her rough, plump hand in his. She smiled.

"They'll be the surprised pair, the two of them, when they come home," she said. "They an' their tricks!"



## The Wish Grave

By Ruth Wilson Herrick

Author of "The Day of Retribution," "Courting Widow O'Harahan," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY S. B. ASPELL

ELIZABETH ANN, sternly crushing down her envy, knelt in front of the old, white-enameled commode and pulled out the middle drawer. It was the treasure chest of a very precise and methodical little girl, one in which everything appeared to be neatly stowed away in boxes, boxes of a dozen different kinds and colors, which Elizabeth Ann set in a symmetrical pile on the top of the commode until she came to the one for which she was looking.

Among others there was a square candy box with a picture of three kittens on it, poking their round heads out from an envelope. Inside, were packed a wee doll trunk containing one red bead; a toothpick box of straw, holding a green toy pickle and a pair of butterfly wings, wrapped in tissue paper; a pink satin handkerchief; a bit of ancient, homespun linen falling into decay; a round pill box, quite empty—like many another—marked, "Money. Elizabeth Ann"; and a small tin box labeled, "Tiniminiwinkum Ca's fur," whose contents had obviously been extracted—doubtless with tears—from the person of a tiger-striped cat.

Besides all of these, which belonged in the one large candy box, Elizabeth Ann produced several baskets and

smaller pasteboard receptacles, coming at last to a circular basket of pink, pimply straw, which she set upon the floor and opened.

The ladies who came to call on Elizabeth Ann's mother were inclined to shake their heads when they were invited to peer, unseen, through the crack of the door to see how Elizabeth Ann played. She lived too much in her imagination, they said. It was unnatural for a little girl to sit so motionless, for an hour at a time, while only her mind played. She should be running about with the other children.

Indeed, the play itself, to an onlooker, appeared a very stupid affair. Elizabeth Ann sat on the floor by the commode, with a semicircle of various objects about her, and, after her paper dolls had been unpacked from the pink basket, moved these personages about as if she had been playing parchesi. To the child the play was a drama. The semicircle of various objects was a village street facing upon an open park, and the life of this village was as real to her as the routine of her own.

A little doubtfully, Elizabeth Ann looked at the new paper doll in her hand. Mrs. Blodgett had given it to her that morning, Mrs. Blodgett being the rather mysterious person who had

appeared—for no particular reason seemingly—in Elizabeth Ann's household that very week. She was a large lady, quite ungrammatical, and she wore white aprons. Elizabeth Ann had not quite accepted her as yet, in spite of the fact that she smiled indulgently and held out her hand with a vague, pleasant gesture whenever Elizabeth Ann appeared. It was embarrassing to know just how to treat the proffered hand. It evidently was not intended for one to shake, for Elizabeth Ann had tried that, and Mrs. Blodgett had seemed surprised. This morning, however, the hand had held the new doll baby, and Elizabeth Ann had received the gift with a shy "thank you" and a puzzled smile.

The grave decision now incumbent upon a little girl was this: Which of the village matrons was best fitted to be the mother of this white-robed infant, whose pasteboard cheeks were so alluringly pink and whose head so adorably bald?

According to Elizabeth Ann, the Mesdames Pansy lived in a large, rambling house at the extreme west end of the village. They were two widowed sisters-in-law, living together in a mad affluence of wealth within this mansion of solid mahogany furniture and perpetual fruit cake, with servants to burn, Angora cats by the score, and wicker couches upon which to recline on hot summer afternoons. One Mrs. Pansy was an invalid, poor thing! She fainted incessantly, causing myriads of servants to flock to her assistance a dozen times a day. It was a wonderful household, even though to the casual observer it did look like the round top of mother's mending basket, with two stiff dolls standing up on it.

Mrs. Violet, directly across from the Pansies, occupied a square writing portfolio of father's, and kept her fierce watchdog, a great Dane, in the glass-inkwell, which served admirably as a

kennel. Next to her dwelt sweet Mrs. Forget-me-not, up a flight of steps leading into a cozy cottage—in reality, a doll's high chair. Her husband traveled, and that was why her face, for all its sweetness, was so wistful and her eyes so blue and lonesome.

Beside her stood the abode of Mrs. Primrose. Now the printer had carelessly smeared the color on the face of this lady in such a way as to give her a double nose and a mouth that wandered about the lower half of her countenance—as aimlessly as a river upon a geography map. The result was a bit startling. Her eyes cocked slightly also. In short, Elizabeth Ann had decided that she was "queer," and her house, in consequence, was doomed to be encircled with a glamour of fearful dread. Often she had fits. She was—as Elizabeth Ann often whispered to herself for mere love of the name—she was an *apopleptic*! And her house? A strange affair, indeed, with a tattered weather vane and lightning rod on the roof—namely, mother's coffee mill. And Mrs. Primrose was wont to enter it oddly through the squeaky drawer in the front.

Across the lawn—we are now nearing the end of the row—lived gay Mrs. Poppy. Truly she was a social butterfly if one ever lived. Dances! She went to one every night of her life and often to three. She arrived home in cabs and taxis that clattered and buzzed down the village street at two o'clock of a morning and brought Mrs. Primrose to the door with a candle in each rigid hand to see what caused the disturbance. Yes, Mrs. Poppy was frivolous to distraction, and luncheoned and dined and frolicked day in and night out.

But why, to-day of all days, should Elizabeth Ann sit thus dreamily with the fascinating new doll baby almost falling out of her hand, as her eyes,





*Elizabeth Ann grieved over this state of affairs.*

blue and wistful as those of her Mrs. Forget-me-not, gazed quite through the village street into space? Why should this game, the anticipation of which had teased her through the dragging hours of arithmetic and spelling, suddenly have turned tasteless and stale like a gingersnap with the snap gone out of it?

It was because Elizabeth Ann had stopped for a minute on her way home from school to see Marguerite. It was because Marguerite's aunt was visiting

at their house with a real baby. It was because the baby, six months old, wore little stuffed bootees of blue-and-white yarn that made its funny, flapping feet look like the pictures of Little Lord Fauntleroy's grandfather with his poor old foot wadded up in honor of the gout.

Elizabeth Ann tried hard to bring her mind to the subject under discussion. Which lady should be blessed with this new doll baby? Mrs. Poppy could give her a gorgeous social career;



*She thanked each one personally, and whispered her gratitude into the animal's ear in a soft, loving voice.*

Mrs. Pansy had a fortune to leave her—

It was not successful. For the first time in history the enchantments of the play village failed to enchant, and the little, mystified paper dolls played to a half-hearted audience. Elizabeth Ann, her knees drawn up to meet her chin, grieved over this state of affairs, even while admitting its existence.

"You're not real," she whispered sadly, but conscientiously, to her cast of characters, "and that's why I don't love

you quite as much as I did yesterday."

She packed them up slowly, with many little pats of sympathy, and shut them away in the drawer. Then Elizabeth Ann, with reluctant feet that still carried her on, and a jealous, envious spirit that would not be crushed, went back over to Marguerite's house.

All the little girls were over there, of course. They were taking turns holding the baby, smoothing down its sheer white dress, tying its bonnet strings, and soothing it with the lullabies they had learned at school.

"Why, Elizabeth Ann!" they cried when the newcomer entered Marguerite's dining room. "Why aren't you at home playing with your paper dolls?"

"Oh, I don't know," fibbed Elizabeth Ann, looking guilty.

There were times when the ways of little girls seemed almost as mysterious to her as the antics of those utterly alien creatures known as boys and brothers. Elizabeth Ann was an only child, and her ways were distinctive.

Next to the baby, the greatest excitement of the afternoon seemed to center about a new ring of Marguerite's. It was a small, dull-gold one, set with a wee rose diamond.

"Where did you get it?" inquired Elizabeth Ann politely.

"Why, that's her wish ring. She dug it up this afternoon," every one cried. "Haven't you been making wishes on white horses?"

This was too intricate to follow. Realizing that she had lost out again on the fad of the moment, Elizabeth Ann merely shook her head.

"Why, you do this every time you see a white horse," explained Marguerite, coming to the rescue. She moistened her right forefinger on her lips, touched it to the palm of her left hand, and then clapped her right fist and left palm together. "Then, when you've seen fifty white horses, you make a wish on a slip of paper and bury it in the ground somewhere for three days. Auntie showed me how to do it. Then, when the three days are up, you go dig up your wish!"

The triumphant air of Marguerite! She added complacently:

"I got my ring that way!"

To say that Elizabeth Ann was bewitched by this fairy tale of real life would do scant justice to the thrill she experienced as she suddenly resolved to try the magic method and see what it could do for her and the desire of her own heart. It was characteristic of her that she said nothing to the other little girls about her plan. Whatever Elizabeth Ann did she did alone, and suffered and triumphed over the consequences with no one but Elizabeth Ann, who always understood.

Nevertheless, she began her quest for white horses that very afternoon on her way home. Throughout the rest of the week, not a white horse ventured upon the street but was "counted" by Elizabeth Ann, who moistened her right forefinger with her lips, touched it to her left palm, and then clapped her right fist and her left palm together. It was a rhythmic gesture, pleasant to make, and Elizabeth Ann,

walking the highways and byways of town, was surprised to find how many horses were accommodatingly white. Whenever possible, she thanked each one personally for the favor, and whispered her gratitude into the animal's ear in a soft, loving voice as he stood hitched by the sidewalk or tied in some one's barn.

Since the pursuit of the quest took time, the little paper dolls, who saw Elizabeth Ann no more, may have puzzled over this strange neglect; but mother and the mysterious Mrs. Blodgett, occupied by weightier matters, gave no heed to the child's change of occupation, and were therefore oblivious of the great quest and the desire of her heart.

When Elizabeth Ann had seen her fifty white horses, she went out into the garden, where the gooseberry bushes along the fence hid her from the house, and dug the wish grave with a trowel of Hiram's that she found in the cellar. At the bottom, where the loose earth formed a soft cradle, she laid a folded slip of paper upon which she had written her wish. What need to mention the desire of Elizabeth Ann's heart? The tipsy letters spelled out the words: "A Baby Brpther." And the little sister-to-be heaped up the earth again over the wish grave, and patted it hopefully.

Three days is a long time to wait, especially under mental strain; and misgivings of various kinds worried Elizabeth Ann's mind now and then. Who would take care of the baby? It would belong obviously to her father and mother; but, being responsible for it, Elizabeth Ann felt that she ought to shoulder the brunt of the responsibility of its care. She began to realize, as she studied the situation at length, that a baby would mean a considerable amount of work. Perhaps mother would let her stop school for a while,



"Was he under 'the gooseberry bushes?"

at least until it was old enough to run around.

The time was up at last, the three days' vigil ended. Elizabeth Ann, with heart a-flutter, slipped out into the garden and skirted the gooseberry bushes until she came to the wish grave. Kneeling on the ground, her cheeks pink with anticipation, she grasped the trowel in both hands, and shoved the earth away in frantic little pushes. Deeper and wider grew the wish grave, bigger and blacker grew Elizabeth

Ann's eyes, and her breath came short and fast.

But, oh, the bitterness of the disappointment! She came to, the slip of paper again, bearing the words, "A Baby Brother," just as she had left it. There was nothing more.

The awful emptiness of Elizabeth Ann's heaven from which all faith was gone! She went back to the house and ate a supper of excelsior and salt brine. Then she went to bed and stared at the stark blackness of the night for

years, until at last it became a part of her restless, distorted dreams.

But all nights end—eventually! Elizabeth Ann, waking from a restless sleep, found Mrs. Blodgett standing by her bed. And in her arms, swaddled up in a blue-and-white blanket—

"Oh, where did you find him?" cried Elizabeth Ann. "Was he under the gooseberry bushes?"

"Under the gooseberry bushes!" repeated the good lady, who had lived for days in the anticipation of surprising Elizabeth Ann with her sisterhood.

Elizabeth Ann sprang out of bed.

"Where's mother?" she demanded, and ran on bare feet into her mother's room.

"Are you pleased, mother?" Elizabeth Ann questioned anxiously.

And to father, who stood there by mother's bed, she put the same eager query. "Are you pleased, father?"

"Pleased!" echoed the parents of Elizabeth Ann.

The new sister turned her attention to a close scrutiny of the new baby rolled in the blanket.

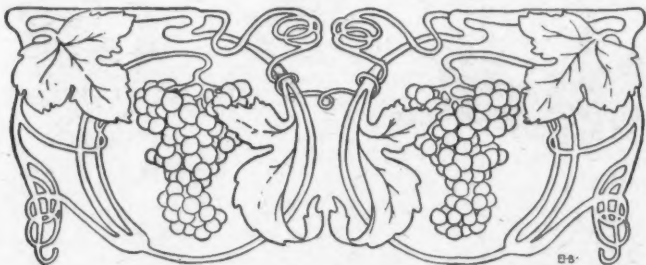
"She asked me," wheezed Mrs. Blodgett over the child's head, "she asked me if I found him under the gooseberry bushes."

"I don't think," murmured Elizabeth Ann critically, "that they sent me a very good-sized one. He's not nearly as big as Marguerite's aunt's."

There was dead silence in the room as various people tried to understand one another. Then Mrs. Blodgett, the sentimental, smiled down on the little sister.

"Aren't you going to give him anything?" she questioned, meaning, of course, the first kiss which one always drops, with a wish, upon a new baby's cheek.

"Of course I am," replied Elizabeth Ann, her family pride touched. "I have it all planned. I'm going to give him my paper dolls."



### When a Woman Was Brief

ONE summer when Ethel Barrymore was under contract to Charles Frohman, she was in San Francisco for a rest. While there another manager found her and showed her a new play that suited her exactly. He proposed that she star in the piece. She agreed, and sat down and wrote Frohman a telegram as long as one of the poles on which the wires are strung. The contents of the message, cited briefly, consisted of a request that he release her from her contract with him.

Frohman's answer came quickly. It was:

"No!"

Whereupon Miss Barrymore wired back:

"Oh!"





# The Breath in the Dry Bones

By Helen Baker Parker

Author of "Heart's Desire," "The Golden Bowl," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES HOPE PROVOST

SO that's why we sell gingham and cheese in the back yard of America! That's why, instead of a fine German lady, you'll marry——"

"Marry?"

"Marry. You heard. Haven't you thought ever of a woman yet? Twenty-five you are, and you look like your mother." Just why being twenty-five and looking like his Irish mother should expose him to the perils of matrimony was not evident to Patrick Bergheim; but he knew better than to dam up his father's flow of language. "If it hadn't been for your Grandfather Bergheim, we would have fine positions in the fatherland, so!"

Save for the wind in the Wisconsin pines and the ghost-fingered rain tapping on the window, there fell a silence in the midst of the story of Hermann Bergheim. That name and what it stood for had been mentioned often, though mysteriously, as one spells out circumspectly before the very young all matters of birth and death. As they had grown older, Paddy and Elsa, in moments of radical individualism, had been taunted with being Hermann Bergheim all over again. Always they had known him to be a disgrace to an honored and almost royal name. Always, from across the sea and the years, that short life had followed them like a sinister shadow.

Patrick was considering the advisability of asking his father why *he* hadn't married a fine German lady when the man, fingering a cartoon of presidential features, continued:

"It wasn't like these days! Then, one might think a thing, but a wise man kept it here." He indicated a safety-deposit vault behind solemn Saxon eyes. "But he! Fool that he was, to write what he did against the kaiser!"

"Write!" Here was something worth the risk. "Write!"

Ashamed and outraged, the man confessed the disgraceful socialism of a band of German students and of the leader, Bergheim, a flaming spirit of revolt.

"Always was he a scribbler, and when I was a young one, he was writing pamphlets, tracts—circulating them secretly. Rights they demanded—you'd have thought every man was a king! Myself, I think he was mad."

"What became of him, father?"

What became of him was whispered. "And I remember," Patrick's father finished, "how mother held me up and let me kiss him through the bars. I can feel it yet, the cold iron and his hot lips—and the way they trembled."

For years Patrick had been reminded almost daily that he was "queer as the devil," and had been taken, of course

figuratively, by the nape of the neck and dragged to the closet door, there to behold, for the good of his soul, the family skeleton and hear the deterrent rattling of its dry bones. For years he had rebelled inwardly at the thralldom of the general store, and had lived in secret a life of his own. Now at last he was beginning to understand why certain forbidden masterpieces were dog-eared, back-broken; why he ran away the night "The Seven Sisters" visited the town hall above the fire-engine house; why he followed them to their next one-night stand; why, on his ignominious and painful return, he rewrote "The Seven Sisters," making them eight and improving upon their love affairs. He knew now the meaning of the cigar boxes full of papers tied with twine string. He regretted the odor, not yet knowing that much successful literature smells to heaven.

It had been coming a long time, but that night he packed his other suit and a picture of his mother with laughing eyes and mouth fashioned for kisses—of which she had had none too many—counted his money for a ticket to Chicago—Chicago being twenty dollars cheaper than New York—and lay down to dream of being a novelist. Inheriting his mother's Irish eyes, he had, somehow, missed her sense of humor, so he saw nothing funny in his dream.

In the morning his mother cried, as only a woman can who was made for laughter; his father lamented: "I've done my best—but *mein Gott!* It's come out in you! And you'll marry some woman who—"

"What do I want of a

woman?" Which shows, when you think of it, that Patrick *was* queer.

Arriving in the city, Patrick, somewhat stiffened by his night ride, had left one silver dollar. With that precious coin playing solitaire with itself in his pepper-and-salt trousers pocket, he hunted a job, and, some days later, found it on the shady side of Wabash Avenue—just as the dollar had been turned into a nickel by the magic wand of hunger.

In six months, by dint of strict economy and an irreproachable habit of getting to the office first and staying last, he rose to the position of book-keeper at seventy dollars a month. By day a submissive subject of frenzied finance, at night he was free in the re-



CHARLES  
HOPE  
PROVOST

"I remember how mother held me up and let me kiss him through the bars."

public of his brain. He left the office at six, stooped, slow-footed; he approached Mrs. 'Enry 'Opkin's lodging house with a spring in his step, a light in his eyes; for were there not, in a fourth-floor back room that faced the alley, a bottle of ink, a pen, and a pad of paper?

After a while it was done—his first novel—and started to that bourne from which one million—or is it two million?—manuscripts return. Production had been fairly inexpensive; though, to be sure, there had been the stamps and the hired typewriter, set on a pillow so it would not sit on the nerves of the woman who lodged below. But distribution of his ware—there was the rub!

He began to be greeted on his return from the office by a round hall stand with cold marble on the top and a large package with a cold printed slip. It was not quite available, a fact regretted in New York. But this fact was no indication of its lack of merit.

And then he met a woman on the stairs. Meeting on the stairway in fiction suggests trailing opera cloaks, broad, polished steps, little white-gloved finger tips on marble balustrades. Meeting on the stairway in Mrs. 'Opkin's lodging house suggested twelve sardines packed in a tin box. It necessitated turning sidewise and flattening one's self against the magenta kalsomine. By two women in moving-picture hats, it simply could not be done. Patrick and the woman had little difficulty, as they were both considerably under weight, and he removed his hat the minute he saw her, and she had only a very little bonnet with a chicken feather on it.

She had been at the house a week, and was finding it difficult to get used to the three flights. She had been a floor lower at the last place. Prices go down as the stairs go up.

We wish we could say that Katy

Kelly had an unforgettable beauty, one of those faces that haunt you till you die. We must tell the truth. You might forget Katy's face. But you would never forget *her*! She was a white-faced little thing, with waving, shiny, bluish-black hair, disconcerting, pansy-colored eyes that you had to look into quite a while to find out if she was laughing or crying, and a twenty-two-inch waist measure.

Passing daily on the stairs, gambling on the chance to sit down in the ingrain-carpeted parlor with Mrs. 'Enry 'Opkin's first two husbands enlarged in crayon on the wall, Patrick learned that Katy was honored with the privilege of selling ten-dollar dog collars in the finest retail store in the world. And she knew where he worked because she remembered the big fire there the year before, and she knew the girl—it happened to.

They had little opportunity for conversation. They would linger in the plush parlor which smelled of fried liver from the side and beer from the rear. Sometimes, if the painter, who had once been a Painter, was through with the *Daily News*, they borrowed it, and Patrick read solemnly and exhaustively the "Book Notices," and Katy turned with alacrity to the column where it says that primrose velvet edged with skunk makes a neat dinner gown. Then they carefully folded their respective portions, laid them on the cold marble mantel, and went upstairs.

They went Indian file, but quite near, up the Brussels flight, the ingrain flight with the ink stain on the next to the top step, and the matting flight, at which stage in their ascent he got into the habit of helping her. Then they parted at their rooms, which stood side by side. Once, in spite of himself, he saw a little white bed in the corner, a washstand—which led a double life, being a buffet in secret—and, swinging in a

gilded cage in the alley window, a canary, because, as she said: "You've got to have something *alive*, sure! You've simply got to! The city's such a lonesome desert!"

Even after entering their rooms, they were still near. The doors into the hall had shrunk, and the thresholds had settled, to say nothing of the partitions being thin; so sometimes when he heard her moving softly about and singing to herself and the bird—she had a remarkable voice in her little chest, but she did not know it, so she sang peacefully on about "The sun shines bright in my old Kentucky home"—he stuffed the keyhole and laid his other coat down at the yawning threshold. It was difficult to write for posterity with Katy Kelly singing in the next room.

Part of Patrick's seventy dollars a month went home to his mother. Part of it went to night school twice a week—to compensate in some measure, if possible, for the college education he had missed. General reading relating to his art he did at a free library.

He worried about his lack of training in English, but a publisher's representative, in a polite note that was breaking at the folds where it lay against Patrick's vest lining, told him that his greatest fault was good English, which, of course, wasn't the way people talked.

Of course he wrote another novel as a traveling companion to the first, and a novelette. This he sold; we pass over that hour. It was to be paid for on publication. A week after that hour the magazine went out of print. He knew it was the best thing he would ever do. Two months later he wrote one he knew was better. He was the only one who knew it.

That was, however, a great year. One of his large packages contained the intimate advice that he must have more material for the full orchestra-

tion of his plot. Another soul-warming note requested bigger plots; and the same offering, returning from another shrine, was accompanied by the statement that the plot was too big for the length. Ah, what a year was that! Patrick Bergheim, living down the disgrace of his once illustrious name and on intimate terms with the editors! For did not one advise him intimately, as man to man, that he must write in the middle register? Patrick took this to a friend who was a night reporter. That gentleman would be blamed if he knew the middle register if he met her on State and Madison; but, chewing his cigar with the other molars, he invited cordially:

"Show me your stuff. I betcha I c'n tell you what it ain't!"

Another of those salves inclosed with the homing manuscripts warned him that he must not obtrude his personality. Patrick worked overtime on this suggestion. He got so he was just a red pen in the morning, which added the firm's credits, and a black pen at night that subtracted from his own exchequer. He couldn't help being a personality, though, when through the thin partition he heard Katy say: "Come on now, you little monkey!" and knew that she had opened the bird-cage door.

He kept on writing and studying and buying stamps and being a bookkeeper and getting seventy dollars a month, helping Katy up over the matting flight and noticing how well the back of her waists fitted.

One night, a spring night it was—that day the hand-organ men had been about, and grubby little boys had been selling wilted violets to ladies in open-work blouses—Katy seemed strangely near, so near that he seemed to hear her breathing through the thin partition; so near that her face came right between him and his pad of paper. And there, in the midst of an absolutely original plot, he found himself writing



*His mother cried, as only a woman can who was made for laughter; his father lamented.*

just as people do in a séance when things move a table, "Katy Kelly, I love you! Katy Kelly, I love you!"

He sat up with a start and looked at the magic words. Then he went to his window and gazed into his future—that he was also gazing into Mrs. 'Opkin's ash can is one of the minor accidents of life. He loved Katy. He wanted her. That hour he was quite a personality. There was no sound at all from the next room, except the breathing as of one strangely near. She was sleeping.

He tiptoed back to his pine table, and took up his pen; armed wit' a pen a good bookkeeper can always figure things out. He wanted to marry her, but two things stood in his way. One was Hermann Berghem's disgrace; for, while Patrick knew nothing about eugenics, he had heard of the third and

the fourth generations. He knew and was ashamed that part at least of that wild spirit was in him—the inability to keep in the beaten track. Not that he sympathized in the least with his grandfather's methods! But the disgrace—the prison—— Not in vain had his young imagination been admonished: "There now, look at that! If it hadn't been for him——"

Another thing was his lack of adequate income. When Patrick had first come to the city, seventy dollars had seemed a princely sum. But it costs to live. Swallowing back a stray cough, lest he wake Katy, he added up on little pieces of paper the items of his monthly budget, and there really seemed no room for Katy. If he left out his writing, his stamps, and his large envelopes, that would help a little; still it would hardly keep a woman.



But then what if it would? There was the skeleton!

The very next day he was offered a place in a grocery store, with the opportunity of later buying an interest and rising to the affluence of one hundred and fifty dollars a month. It was a fine opportunity and it would be grabbed off in twenty-four hours. The thought was like a blow in the face. It meant nights and days. It meant carrying the grocery business forever in his brain. The cost of living doesn't go up without some one staying awake to do the boosting. That day he found out something about himself, and the shadow of Hermann Bergheim, traitor, loomed large beside him as he walked out to lunch, avoiding the place where he and Katy often sat side by side at their simple meal. Yes, if he went into the grocery business, he could do it. But then he would never be an author.

He would wait six months. You see, he kept the closet door closed, and sometimes, so clever at self-deception is man, he almost imagined the thing away. Yes, he would wait six months. You never can tell what may happen in a half year. Do not some men wake up in the morning and find themselves famous as well as hungry? That novel "Nora" now, it had been gone two months. Perhaps—

So Patrick and Katy enacted, down stage, with the lights turned low and no one applauding, the world's greatest drama: *Love Deferred*.

"Nora" came back. It had been read with interest, but the dialect was not convincing; if he cared to rewrite it, they would like to see it again. Patrick had not known it was dialect. It was merely the way his mother talked when she got a new dress—not often enough to make her vain, understand—or when she had been crying over a magazine verse by some one with a name like O'Toole.

In the months that followed, Patrick

changed the dress of his brain child, wrapped it with stamps for company, in a very large, fat manila envelope, licked the same respectfully closed, wrote a name in careful, full-arm penmanship, and sent "Nora" back to Mecca.

She stayed a long time, so long that finally he wrote as he had done regarding other efforts:

On May 15th I sent you a short novel—it may have been lost in the mail. If it is not in your office, will you kindly let me know?

He inclosed more stamps. And waited. Finally he gave up hope. The thing was lost, of course—and why not? When he saw the mail trains with their great bags bulging, he wondered that it had not happened years before. And when he read in a five-cent magazine he found on a Paulina Street car that a million manuscripts daily are dumped upon publishers' desks, he blushed to think that he—he—a mere atom in the cosmos he was reading about in the library because he thought maybe if he knew more about cosmoes he could turn the trick—that he should have presumed to offer so much as a single sop to tickle the palate of the public. Well, he mourned the stamps, but more the foolish little hope buried in some nameless grave.

But hope—after all, it's so hard killing it! It has nine lives, and you know that you yourself have got no farther than the fourth, let us say—or, for good measure, the fifth. Perhaps they were considering it; even considering it! On the strength of hope that wouldn't stay buried, he sent an extra ten home to Wisconsin; bought a purple tie and a book not in the library on "The Technique of the Novel"; looked with scorn at the grocer on the corner; and, locking the closet door tight on the skeleton, took Katy out to dinner.

They went straight by the cafeteria to a real restaurant, and plunged to the depth of a dollar, with salad and

dessert. Ah, what a night was that, with her there opposite him, the pink-shaded candle shamed by the light in her glowing eyes! He loved her. He wanted her. He knew he should go home and write the best thing that has appeared in years.

When they got home, the marble stand held a large package, which he abstracted surreptitiously and hid in his coat. He bade Katy an absent-minded good-by. That night he did not hear her say, "Hello, there, wake up, you little monkey, and let's talk!"

Beyond the thin partition he opened the large package. "Nora" was back again. A novel very much like her had just been accepted previously. It was a very peculiar coincidence, but it sometimes happened. That night he could not write. Once, hearing something like a cough in the next room, he moved his chair that he might not see his face in the glass. He had noticed lately that he looked like pictures of—*him*. Patrick knew that he could never write again.

A week from that time he sat up all night qualifying for a two-thousand-dollar prize that was won by a woman with a winter home in Indiana, a summer one in France, a name in fifty-seven tables of contents, and a husband that was in a trust.

And all the time Katy was so provokingly alluring! She was losing weight a little, however, and one of the ten-dollar dog collars would have just fitted her waist—only she knew how to make ten dollars go farther than twenty-two inches. And what if there was a disgrace in his family? Accidents happen in the best American families. So argued Patrick, reading "the greatest newspaper in the world."

One night—it was spring again; wonderful how regularly spring put in its appearance even at Mrs. 'Opkin's lodging house!—he got together a large pile of kindling for his landlady's morn-

ing fire. He read some of the rejection slips over. In the language of the lover of statistics, they would, placed end to end, have reached from the Auditorium Annex to Halsted Street.

He figured it all out—what it had cost him, not reckoning what it had cost Katy. He left that out, and he was a good bookkeeper, too!

He became a grocer. The place that would be grabbed off in twenty-four hours was still waiting after a year.

Then on a Saturday afternoon, yearning for a word with Katy outside the plush mausoleum, he took her to Lincoln Park. She was unusually lovely that day, which is a way women have sometimes. He looked at her almost with disfavor for the thing that—made him *keep* looking at her! You see, it was a vicious circle. And there—amid the sound of waves, the hoarse whistling of mist-mantled boats, and the querulous voice of a woman who knew there were two hard-boiled eggs and a pickle apiece, so why didn't they all dig in?—the skeleton came out of the closet. It always does. It may be to-day; it may be to-morrow; perhaps in the midst of a silence fraught with mighty meaning; perhaps when you are stirring the sugar in your coffee. But the thing will come and sit down there between you—always between you. So you might as well have it over with. Patrick confessed it all, the whole shameful story, down to the last hurried kiss through cold prison bars and the clinging of feverish hands.

"Oh," reproved Katy, "why, *why* didn't you tell me before?"

"I hated to—I kept putting it off. I didn't intend to now, but it just—came out. Can you—can you still respect me?"

Katy, her face turned from him, was silent a long time, and then, for even ten-dollar dog collars had not kept in leash her Irish humor: "Yes—I still—respect you!"

"And I love you!" There it was, and he hadn't intended to open that door, either! "Katy Kelly, I love you!" he plagiarized from several margins of scribbled pads. "I wasn't going to tell you, but I think it's the way your hair is done."

After a proper period of "How sudden this is!" and "Why, I never dreamed of such a thing!" the weaker vessel taunted him: "You told me six months ago." She was something of a bookkeeper herself.

"I told you?"

"The second step from the top. The one with the ink. The way you took hold of my hand—this one."

She surveyed that member reminiscently, and, one must admit, with satisfaction.

It took some time for him to tell her the most available story in the world and for her to tell it back to him, with no blue penciling of repetitions. By that time a cold breeze was blowing off the lake, and the people with a pickle and two hard-boiled eggs apiece had gone home to their pepsin. But Katy, in a thin white blouse trimmed simply with a brown woolen sleeve, wasn't cold at all.

"I'm a grocer," confessed Patrick, "but I've had dreams of being a—"

"A grocer, Paddy! Why, I don't see any chance for failure in that! I paid twenty cents for a soup bone to-day, and it didn't have any meat on it at



*What a night was that, with her there opposite him, the pink-shaded candle shamed by the light in her glowing eyes!*

all!" She shook a vengeful little fist at whom it might concern. "Paddy"—she leaned closer and twinkled at him after the manner of woman with an ulterior motive—"Paddy, dear"—he had said it first and more times; she had counted and knew herself to be the more reserved—"may I have—" She paused, clinging to his arm; what can the woman want now? "May I have your grandfather—you know—for my novel?"

"My grandfather! Your—your novel!"

She nodded her head vigorously up and down. "But nobody knows it! I do mostly poems, though—I mean verses, you know—that magazines have to have to make the pages come out right. And I sold one once—honest—for five dollars! I bought a hat and

a pair of shoes, and went to the theater with it. You can send them, you know, for two cents, and you can write them lying down with your eyes closed. My feet get so tired standing behind the counter, and my eyes—seeing so much and everything moving—they get to aching sometimes——”

“You—you like it?”

She looked at him, and he saw it in her eyes. She was very near. “Yes, oh, yes! But I like the long ones best—the ones you just keep on and on and on, and whenever you think of a new lover for the heroine, you give him to her, and the hero can keep on making all the money he wants and you don’t have to reform him on account of the stamps.”

“I—I suppose it must be a great lark—but—*my grandfather*——”

“Oh, he was such a dear! A regular brick!”

“But the disgrace—a prisoner——”

Disgrace nothing! Prisoner! Why, Paddy, you don’t know a prisoner from a patriot! That’s what *he* was! A little ahead of the times—that’s the best of it! Oh, I love him! Disgrace! Why, if you sold ten-dollar dog collars and Haviland plates for the brutes to eat off of and blankets to keep their horrible tummies warm—if you stood upon your tired feet all day and sold that to women with diamonds on their powdered chests and sealskin coats draped around their ankles and limousines barking outside, and *then* came home and cooked yourself a soup bone without any meat on it, and got your feet warm by—— Well, I *guess*!” She shrugged her shoulders to indicate her theories of the social crisis. “I love him, that Hermann!”

She hugged her arms across her flat chest, and Patrick Bergheim knew that

his grandfather had been taken to her heart forever. He felt a little jealous until he took *her* to his heart.

“Sure if you were an American like *me*,” argued Katy Kelly, “you’d have appreciated your relative!”

“You—do you want him for a wedding present? It isn’t much, but it’s all I’ve got.”

“Paddy!” she breathed in rapture. “Do I?”—for all the world as if the gift of the groom were a lavallière of diamonds set in platinum. “How good! How lovely! He’ll make a whale of a long one!”

Paddy drew her head beneath his chin so she would not see any personality obtruding out of his eyes, and cleared his throat for the readier achievement of the middle register. “This—this novel writing, Katy, I expect it’s rather good sport?”

“Paddy! You’ve no idea!”

“I’ve understood there’s a good deal in it.”

“Well, of course *we* don’t care for the money—we don’t care that!” She picked something out of space with her little hand—the hand—and threw it into Lake Michigan. “But still, armed with Hermann Bergheim and a grocery business——”

“And each other——”

“And each other, we ought, Paddy, dear, to have a little meat on our bones now and then, enough so they wouldn’t rattle *too* much——”

His arm about her, he looked off in the direction of the fatherland, and sighed; a sigh, we assume, of utter content. So, at least, Katy construed it, and she asked no translation of the spoken words: “Never again, Katy—did! The bones will never rattle any more!”





# The Wind

By S. Carleton

Author of "The Veranda," "A Perfectly Strange Girl," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY R. VAN BUREN

IT was exactly twenty minutes past eleven, on a blazing, scorching June morning, when this story began to happen.

At five, when you couldn't see three yards through the woods for the thick white mist that means it's going to be a boiling day, Uncle Daniel and I left our camp on the shore of the Belle Yvonne River to do a little early-morning trout fishing. Fishing was not what had brought Uncle Daniel to Canada and the Belle Yvonne. He's a cele-

brated person, who writes articles for ethnological papers and the encyclopedia and is going to bequeath his collection of Quiché and Iroquois Indian relics to the Smithsonian when he dies; and his primary business was to dig out the altars of an old Iroquois council ground—where they used to hold their mystic ceremonies and dances and torture people—and write history about it.

I had no business on the Belle Yvonne at all, except that I live with Uncle Daniel instead of with mother,



and that—next to old wampum and queer-looking inscriptions on stones—I think he likes me better than anything else in the world. So, when I thought it would be nice to go out fishing on our first morning on the Belle Yvonne, he left our Indian guides to tidy the camp we'd only arrived at the night before, and put off digging up his council ground till after breakfast.

At five, as I said, we started. At six, because it was too misty to keep on in the canoe, we landed on a rocky little island about a mile down the river, with nothing on it but blueberry bushes, and I began to fish. Uncle Daniel tied up the canoe. And that is important, if it doesn't look so. For at ten, when the trout stopped biting, and the sun had melted the mist and come out red-hot, and I went to get the canoe to go home—the canoe was gone!

Uncle Daniel looked for it, and I looked for it, for an hour. Then we sat down on two hot rocks and looked at each other. There was nothing else to look at, except the glaring, shining, mile-wide river between us and the distant shores of the provinces of Quebec and Ontario. It would have been hot in a shaded room with two electric fans going and the ice in a glass jug of cider cup making a nice, tinkling noise as you poured it into a tumbler. On an island in the middle of the Belle Yvonne River, with no shade higher than blueberry bushes and a whining cloud of mosquitoes round both our heads, it was awful.

I always take care of Uncle Daniel, and I felt I would have to do something before he began to fuss. It wasn't the slightest use my sitting there staring at him. I knew, and he knew, that he had left the canoe last, and that he'd probably been in one of his absent-minded fits, when he's thinking about Indian relics, and forgotten to tie her up. It was no use to shout for our Indians, either, because they were a mile

upriver and couldn't hear us; and there was no hope of their coming after us without orders. If we stayed away all day, they'd just think we'd meant to stay away all day, and that was all there was to it. There wasn't even any hope that they might see our canoe adrift and get worried, since it would naturally float downstream and they were up—at least, Uncle Daniel and I thought they were. Where they really were comes in afterward.

Well, then, as I said, I knew I would really have to do something to get us off that island. I turned my head to where the canoe ought to have been and wasn't, and the far-off, shady-looking shore where our camp was, and the river between it and me. Uncle Daniel couldn't swim, of course, and I didn't really feel as if I wanted to try it myself. There was a nasty look about that river, as if its smooth face hid that horrid, deep sort of whirlpools that you can't see till you're in them. But all the same I'd begun to say carelessly that I believed I'd swim to the mainland, when Uncle Daniel cut me off.

"I won't have you try it," he snapped. "I don't require a dead heroine as much as I do a live niece—even if you are beginning to look like roast turkey down the sides of your neck!"

"I could swim ashore perfectly well, and you know it!" I forgot about being careless, because I felt like fifty roast turkeys, and he needn't have been so frank. "Then, if I couldn't get along the shore to camp and send the men down for you, I'd be an idiot!"

"You wouldn't—you'd be a corpse!" You never know when Uncle Daniel will stop being absent-minded, but I saw this was one of the times. "This river is one mass of potholes and eddies and things—and I won't have you try it! You can just sit down here quietly and wait. Our somewhat unintellectual guides know we went down the river, right enough. By sundown they may

decide they'd better start out and look for us."

"They may," I returned, without conviction.

Uncle Daniel grunted. He knew as well as I did that our guides were about the worst we'd ever picked up. He'd engaged them only because they were all we could find at short notice, and he'd had nerves that if we didn't get up the Belle Yvonne, some one else might, and discover his old council ground ahead of him. But suddenly he smiled his nice, old-gentleman's smile at me.

"We've been in tighter places, Sister Anne," said he. Only Uncle Daniel is allowed to call me "Sister Anne"; my name is Angelica Westlake. "There aren't any Zapatistas, for one thing."

I shivered. Uncle Daniel and I really had had a dreadful time last winter in Mexico; looking for Quiché Indian relics seemed to get him into all the scrapes there were to get into, and we had only got to Vera Cruz, and a transport with our lives. But it was not that I was thinking of, but the private trouble of my own which was all that had sent me to Mexico at all. Naturally I didn't mention that. I said:

"N-no. But, to be honest with you, there doesn't seem to be any breakfast, either. I was thinking that I might cook my trout if you'd—"

Uncle Daniel cut me off, firmly, if he hadn't turned pale. "It's not one bit of good saying if I'd clean them. I can't. I never have cleaned trout."

Neither had I. I supposed that if we were going to live through the day, I'd have to—but I put it off till I was really sure we were starving to death on a red-hot island. Those trout had a queer, oily kind of a smell in the hot sun, not a bit like anything you wanted to eat. I got up, half to get out of their neighborhood, and half because I thought I'd better look up the river to see if any of our Indians *were* coming down it. But there was not one mortal, earthly

sign of them. There was just the blue, shiny, swirling river, with the sun glaring down on it hotter and hotter every minute, and it was no appropriate time for Uncle Daniel to sing: "Sister Anne, Sister Anne, do you see anybody coming?"

"No," I said shortly. I saw by my wrist watch that it was just twenty minutes past eleven. It struck me that I'd better clean those horrible, smelly trout and cook them, because we'd probably get nothing else all day, and I turned round to do it, facing Uncle Daniel and looking down the river. "I don't see anybody coming. And I don't believe—"

But I stopped, with my mouth wide open. For I did see somebody—not coming, but come!

Close in to the downstream end of the island—which, of course, Uncle Daniel and I had both had our backs to—was a canoe, with one man in it. There was another canoe behind him, full up with two Indians and dunnage, but I never looked at it. Because the man kneeling in the first canoe was very dark in the khaki shirt that was rolled up from his smooth brown arms and down from his smoother brown throat—except that his mustache was fairer than you had thought it was going to be, and his eyes were hazel gray. And he was smiling at me, with his eyes shining under his thick eyelashes, till honestly and truly my heart stood still inside me.

It was not because he was the best-looking man I had ever laid eyes on, either; nor that he was clean and cool, even in that heat, while I was exactly like the roast turkey Uncle Daniel had compared me to, and rather fishy besides; not even that I knew he would take us off that red-hot island. It was just simply and solely that he was the only man I had ever thought I could love in all my life and had gone to Mexico to get away from, hoping and praying I would never see him again. .



*There wasn't even any hope that they might see our canoe adrift and get worried.*

"I—it's Mr. French, Uncle Daniel! I met him at mother's," I said. I knew Uncle Daniel could not know all that meant or Nicky French, either. It was bad enough to know it myself.

Mother was poor and had all she could do to educate and bring out my twin sister Edith, after Uncle Daniel adopted me. I never exactly matched at home, either. I had been back there only once since I left, and then I hadn't enjoyed myself; and the reason was Nicky French. Of course, I should

have realized he was a friend of Edith's, but I hadn't. I had simply liked him—I couldn't even have told myself why—and I had never mentioned him to Edith till one evening he had come when I was alone and had stayed till mother and Edith came home from the Holmes' dinner.

Edith had begun to cry, and had gone upstairs as soon as he'd gone away. I hadn't seen why till I had gone up after her, and she had said, in a careful, February-evening sort of voice, that at

least I might have had the decency not to make Nicky French send an excuse and stay away from the Holmes' dinner, even if he hadn't known she was going. Then she had said he had been coming to the house all that autumn to see *her* till I'd taken him away. And that, of course, I couldn't be expected to care, except that it was pretty selfish for me to try to marry a rich man, when Uncle Daniel gave me crêpe de Chine underclothes and more silk stockings than I could even try on; and that she had meant to go to Paris for her honeymoon as soon as Nicky really proposed to her, and have money to spend for once in her life.

Of course, I did have crêpe de Chine nightgowns and silk stockings, but it simply made me boil to have those things put on a level with Nicky French. Still, I don't think I should have lost my temper so badly if Edith hadn't said that if I'd only go away, and stay away, I'd see how soon she would write to me that she and Nicky were engaged.

I had said that in that case she needn't trouble to write to me at all till she *was* engaged—I shouldn't care—and that she was welcome to marry Mr. French to-morrow; both of which had been awful, fearful lies, for I loved Edith's letters and I adored Nicky French. And I had gone straight back to Uncle Daniel, and off to Mexico, the very next morning.

I had never seen Nicky French again, not even to say good-by to—till I saw him now in a canoe on the Belle Yvonne River. And I knew I was so glad to meet him, even with Edith between us, that I could have died.

For now I have to put in the dreadful part of it. Edith—my own twin sister—never had written to me till just before I came up the Belle Yvonne; and then it was to say what she had promised she would! I had been too wild with humiliation even to finish her letter; all I had read was the first page.

But, remembering even that, I couldn't see how Nicky French could dare to look at me now with a queer, deep sort of gladness in his eyes.

I don't think I even spoke to him. I just said, "Edith, Edith, Edith," to myself as hard as ever I could, and tried not to remember she had thought of him as piles of silk stockings and going to Paris when she wanted to. And then I scrambled down that island after Uncle Daniel and shook hands with Nicky French.

Of course he bundled us both into his canoe and took us back to camp. I sat up in the bow, with my back to him, because I felt too sunburned and fishy to be looked at; and I was wondering how Edith had got engaged to him, and wishing I had finished her letter, instead of just shoving it into my suit case half read. Naturally, I didn't want to talk. But I heard Nicky asking Uncle Daniel if there were any other people up the Belle Yvonne, and if he knew whom the Indians belonged to that he had met that morning going downriver with some one's canoes and dunnage.

Uncle Daniel said he didn't know, and that he hadn't seen any canoes. I hadn't, either; but I remembered how thick the mist had been when we landed on our island, and that neither of us could have seen twenty canoes go by. I wasn't really interested in canoes, anyhow, till we rounded the river bend that hid our camp—and then I sat up as if some one had hit me. Every single one of *our* canoes, which had been hauled up in a little sandy bay, was gone!

I didn't even try to shout for our guides. Our tents were invisible, of course, because we'd pitched them in a lovely open glade back of a cliff a hundred feet above the river, but I knew, without seeing them, that they were empty and that it was *our* guides Nicky French had met going down the river

after they'd deserted us and stolen all our stuff!

I couldn't see why they'd done it. They'd seemed contented enough the night before, except that I'd heard them talking in their lean-to long after I'd gone to bed in my tent. I didn't know what to do about it. If we'd had even one canoe and a box of biscuits, I think I'd have whispered to Uncle Daniel to hold his tongue about the thing till Nicky French had gone on wherever he was going. But as it was, it was too serious. I always take charge of things, and I couldn't let Uncle Danny be landed to starve to death in a desolate place he couldn't get away from.

I said: "Uncle Daniel, those were our men Mr. French met going down-river. They've cleared out!" And if my voice sounded queer, I felt queer.

Uncle Daniel, anyhow, didn't believe me till he and I and Nicky French climbed up to the plateau where we had left the guides—and saw that all they had left us was our tents, Uncle Daniel's papers, and our suit cases. There wasn't even a frying pan or a single box of food.

Nicky French whistled. "Looks to me," he said—and I had a funny idea that he had a reason for it—"as if they hadn't wanted to encourage you to stay here!"

The antiquarian in Uncle Daniel turned around, blazing. "Stay here! I'd stay here if I had to live on poison ivy and water! Didn't I tell you I'd pretty surely discovered that this very glade we're camped on was the ancient council ground used by the early Iroquois Indians—and that my whole professional reputation hangs on whether I'm right or not? I told those Indians so, anyhow; and that I meant to take away the remains of their sacrificial altars if I had to dig up the whole place to find them."

"H-m! Yes," said Nicky.

Uncle Daniel blazed up harder. "Do

you mean to say those men cleared out just because I was going to dig here?"

"Oh, I don't know," Nicky fenced hastily. "You know they do sometimes make a fuss about antiquarian researches. But your men were more likely just worthless. And of course"—I saw he was bound to smooth Uncle Daniel down, though it was a minute before I saw why—"it would be madness to go back now, just as you've got here."

"I wouldn't stir if it were sense," said Uncle Daniel crossly. "The only trouble is that I don't see what else I can do!"

I said I could go down the river for more men and food, if Mr. French would lend me one of his canoes, but he and Uncle Daniel both shook their heads at once. Nicky walked over to the edge of the plateau, and shouted: "Andrew!"

A respectable old Indian, with a red handkerchief tied under his felt hat, came out of the bushes as if he'd been waiting there. He said something in Indian, and Nicky French, whom I had seen before only in evening clothes at dances and in mother's drawing-room, talked to him in the same queer, soft language for a good five minutes. Then he turned around to Uncle Daniel.

"He says it's all bluff, and it's quite safe for you to stay here," he began, and corrected himself hastily. "I mean Andrew thinks your guides won't come back again, and that they were worthless men whom you're well rid of. But even he doesn't think this particular glade is a very good place to camp. I don't mean anything about the old altars you suppose are buried in it, but—Andrew says it's too windy."

"Windy!" Uncle Daniel and I both gasped at once.

Nicky nodded. "There's a gap in the hills just across the river," he explained, "and, as far as I can make out, a sort of local cyclone's apt to come out of it and cut a clean swath right through



here. Andrew says it's just that wind which has cleared this glade, and that it isn't any old burial place."

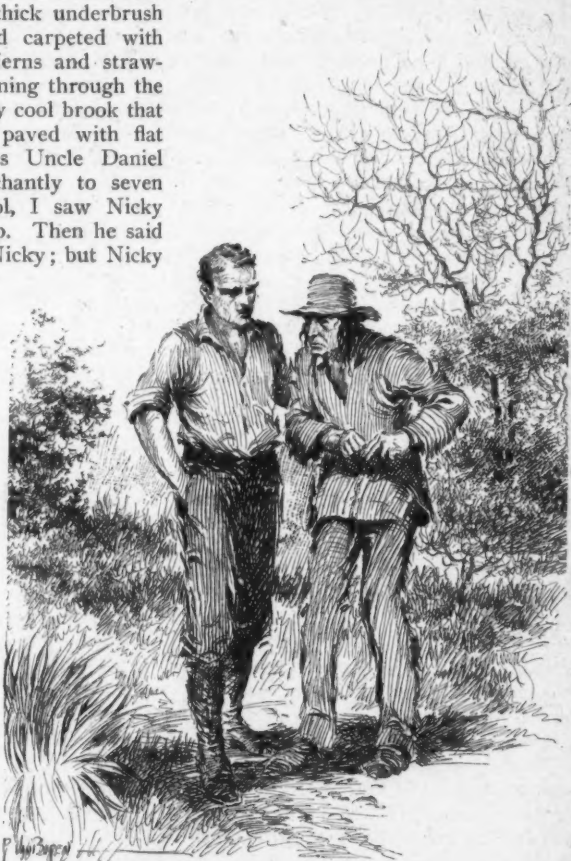
"I never said it was," Uncle Daniel snapped. "I said it was a place where the ancient Iroquois held all their mystic rites and ceremonies, and had their seven sacrificial altars. Why, you've only got to look and you'll see it! Of course it was cleared!"

All I saw was a long, wide glade, which certainly looked as if it had been cleared, walled in by thick underbrush and heavy woods and carpeted with short, emerald-green ferns and strawberry friend; and, running through the middle of it, a heavenly cool brook that widened into a pool paved with flat white stones. But as Uncle Daniel waved his hand trenchantly to seven points round that pool, I saw Nicky French's Andrew jump. Then he said something quickly to Nicky; but Nicky only nodded impatiently, and, in two minutes, he had taken any responsibility about Uncle Daniel straight out of my hands.

Uncle Daniel was going to stay in the glade and pursue his digging there; and Nicky French was going to stay, too, and fish, if we could put up with him; while Andrew and the other Indian, after unloading Nicky's tents and all his stuff for us to live on, were to go down the river to get fresh guides, canoes, and supplies. That would take a week, perhaps more. And

I just stood dumb. The only thing I could think of was how on earth I was to live a whole week out in the woods alone with Nicky French—because Uncle Daniel didn't count when he got absent-minded—and remember he was engaged to Edith!

Because, you know, no matter how you may try not to believe it, the woods do make a difference in people's consciences—they simply don't remember



*Nicky French talked to him in the same queer, soft language for a good five minutes.*

about them. And I had a feeling Nicky had forgotten his—and Edith—already, or he would have spoken about her, instead of looking at me in that way he had, from under his eyelashes. So when he came over to me and said he hadn't seen any other way to manage for Uncle Daniel, and he hoped I wouldn't mind his planting himself on us while his Indians were gone, I said I thought he was most kind—to Uncle Daniel—and that I generally stayed in my tent all day, so I would hardly know he was there.

After that, of course, he went to see about having his stores brought up. And I did go into my tent, though as a rule I never went near it in the daytime; and it just shows you I hadn't much to boast of in the conscience line myself—for the first thing I did was to look into my little three-sided glass. I had hated looking like roast turkey when I met Nicky French, even if he did belong to Edith. But—well, I hadn't! Even under my ears my throat was creamy, and I had that kind of little color in my cheeks that makes my eyes shine about twice as blue as they really are, and my hair was all soft and like gold round my forehead. Even my turquoise blue linen wasn't as fishy as I had thought it was. I was glad I had looked *just like that* when Nicky French first saw me—and suddenly my heart went straight down into my rubber-soled shoes. I had forgotten Edith already!

I made one dive to my suit case and pulled out her letter that I'd never finished, though it was three weeks old; but I couldn't read it even then. The first half page made me sit down on the floor and shove the rest of it back into the envelope, just as it had when first I opened it. For Edith began, "Darling Angelica," and she was so sorry she'd been so hateful to me about Nicky French, because she *was* engaged now, and so happy. And she was going

to Paris for her honeymoon, and wouldn't I write and congratulate her. As for Nicky—

But just there it went over the page, and really and honestly I couldn't turn it. I felt too hateful about Edith, and raging with Nicky for daring to look at me as he had that morning, and more raging with myself for not realizing that brothers-in-law could look any way they chose. I loved Nicky—there's no sense in hiding it. And I knew—no matter what was in Edith's letter—that he loved me and had been mad with joy at seeing me. But the reason I forgot to put that letter back in my suit case was that I began to pray hard that I might remember I had *crêpe de Chine* underclothes and Edith nothing but Nicky, and that I might not take him away from her. I just dropped the letter anywhere when Uncle Daniel called me and I had to go out to dinner.

Nicky had cooked that dinner. He seemed to have done everything else, too, for the camp looked like a different place, and there was a heavenly smudge of some sweet, sweet bark burning, to keep the mosquitoes off while we ate. I saw Uncle Daniel liked him nearly as quickly and inexplicably as I had. He was twice as happy with another man to talk to, instead of me, who am only a girl, after all. Nobody in the world seemed to really want me, when I came to think of it. So I slipped away to wash the dishes while Nicky and Uncle Daniel smoked.

The first thing I knew a brown hand took the heavy tin pan of dishes away from me as if it had been an empty plate.

"That's not the way," said Nicky. "Here—"

But I didn't hear what else he said. I wanted to get it over about Edith.

"I had a letter from Edith a—little while ago." And I couldn't care if I blurted it out. "She wrote that I was to congratulate her."

"Yes," said Nicky. He didn't even look at me. He cleaned the knives up and down in the ground. "I hope you're as happy about it as I am!"

It was pretty dark, anyhow, but for a moment I couldn't see whether he was cleaning knives or not. I was going to say that he and Edith both had my very best wishes, but something choked me. Every girl will know how you feel when you've hoped a man likes you best and—he doesn't! But before I could speak, Nicky exclaimed: "Listen! Is that wind?"

"It's Uncle Daniel—digging in the dark," I said viciously.

"No; not that. Listen!"

And suddenly I heard something over Uncle Daniel's pick—far, far off, like a drum rolling or— But I knew instantly what it was really like, because Uncle Daniel and I had had such awful experiences in Mexico and I had heard an angry crowd coming down on us before.

"Who—who is it?" I gasped.

"It's wind," said Nicky. "Coming out of the hills and across the river. Scott, I believe Andrew was right about this place! But hear it! Isn't it wonderful?"

It was; but it was dreadful, too. From far, far off it gathered and gathered, a great, roaring river of sound coming closer to us every second, like a regiment of cavalry gone mad and shouting over the thunder of their horses' gallop. Before I could even jump to Uncle Daniel, it was on us. The high trees that made the sides of the glade bent over and streamed out flat, as if they had been feathers; the dishpan flew into the fire and put it out—which was luck, if I didn't think of it; Nicky pulled me down on the ground, where we rolled over Uncle Daniel; and when we got up, the whole thing was over, as lightning quick as it had come—and our tents were flat

on the ground, with all we owned blown out of them.

Nicky put them up again, whistling through his teeth the whole time he did it. I heard him telling Uncle Daniel, uncontradicted, that we would move out of that glade in the morning if we were going to have gusts like that. But I didn't join in the one-sided conversation, and I didn't tell Uncle Daniel that Nicky was engaged to Edith, and how nice it was, though I had been going to. I lit a lantern, and I scrambled round that glade by myself—for that wind had blown away my letter from Edith, and I couldn't find it. I went to bed.

By morning I had got hold of myself. I saw I would simply have to be lovely to Nicky and make him think I was truly joyful that he was engaged to Edith. I had no real reason to be anything else, if I made myself face hard facts. Nicky had kissed me—once; but even on that one evening when we had been alone together, he had never told me he loved me. And if I had thought he did, I put it out of my head.

I opened my tent door, to go out and be a sister to him—and I felt more like a cross aunt. There was a note tied on my tent, to say he and Uncle Daniel had gone off early. I had known Uncle Daniel would be exploring round, of course; but somehow I hadn't expected Nicky French to go off and leave me alone all day. The glade was a nice place to be alone in, all green and cool and shady between the heavy birch woods and the high bracken that walled it in on each side and one end, but it gave me a queer, solitary sort of feeling.

When I'd eaten the breakfast Nicky had left keeping hot for me, and was lying on the grass in the shade—half watching the sunlight flicker on a bunch of leaves on the downriver side of the glade and half thinking I must *not* think



*"That's not the way," said Nicky. "Here——" But I didn't hear what else he said. I wanted to get it over about Edith.*

of Nicky—I was deciding it would be more cheerful for me to look for Edith's letter again—when suddenly I froze to the ground.

Out of the bracken, on the down-river side of the glade, some one was looking at me! It wasn't Nicky, and it wasn't Uncle Daniel. It was a dreadful, dreadful Indian! I don't mean one of the kind I was used to, like old Andrew, or even the guides who had gone off with our canoes; but a three-hundred-years-ago Indian, with his face

painted black and red and the sunlight glistening on his bare shoulder as if the whole of him had been oiled.

If you think this is going to be a ghost story, it isn't; though for one awful second I thought it was, or else that I was going crazy, because I couldn't be seeing any painted Indians on the Belle Yvonne River. Only, before I could even pinch myself, I knew I wasn't seeing anything. All I was looking at with my heart in my mouth was just some yellow ferns and the

sun glistening on them. There certainly wasn't anything else, and I couldn't believe even a painted Indian could have vanished before my very eyes as if he'd gone into the ground. Only somehow I didn't want to turn my back to that side of the glade, even to look for Edith's letter. I sat just exactly where I was and wished Nicky French would come back.

But there wasn't a sign of him or of Uncle Daniel, either, till dinner time that night. Then they both arrived at once—Uncle Daniel hot and dirty, lug-ging a flat stone he'd found somewhere, with Indian shorthand on it; and Nicky looking as if he'd come out of a band-box after a swim in the river. Both of them apologized for leaving me all day. Uncle had got excited and forgot me; Nicky didn't give any reasons. I didn't mention the silly thing I'd imagined about a queer Indian. I knew I must have imagined it, because it couldn't possibly have been real. I was perfectly sweet to Nicky and helped him wash the dinner dishes. And in the middle of it, he turned round on me.

"Look here, Angelica," said he, "what's the matter—as to you and me?"

I dropped a whole pile of tin plates. I said: "I never told you you might call me 'Angelica'!"

"What else can I call you? 'Miss Westlake's' silly—between you and me!"

I remembered Edith and that I had to be perfectly sweet—and I was. I just murmured: "Why don't you call me Sister Anne, then—as Uncle Daniel does?"

Nicky put down his dish towel and looked at me. It was that lovely, low sunset light you get in June, which slants all yellow and gold under big green trees, and his dark face was utterly good looking in it. But it was as hard as a rock, too, and his voice made me jump.

"Because I don't want to! I don't require you—for a sister."

I was furious. Edith is a dear girl, and he should have been proud to be engaged to her, especially as he couldn't know she thought of him as silk stockings and spending money in Paris. But all I said was: "You'll have to have me, all the same, when you marry Edith!"

Nicky stared at me for ten good seconds. Then every bit of expression went straight off his face. "Oh!" was the only thing he said. He picked up the dish towel he'd put down and the pile of plates I'd dropped.

"I told you she wrote she was engaged in her last letter," I continued politely. "I didn't finish reading it, so I don't know about all her arrangements. But I'll congratulate you now."

"Thank you," said Nicky slowly. "Only—you don't seem to approve of the match very much, if you didn't even finish what Edith had to say about it."

I had a simply sickening idea that he was laughing. I felt so cold and quiet that I knew I must be dreadfully angry.

"I do—if you mean to be good to her," I heard myself say very slowly. "If you're ever going to look at her as you did at me just now, when you said you didn't want me for a sister, and then turn and *laugh*, as you're laughing now, I'll just pray she never does marry you—to be perfectly *wretched*!"

"Angelica!" Nicky gasped it.

The sunset light had gone in one jump, as it does out in the woods, but I had a queer thought that he had turned pale. I felt he was going to say something more to me, too, as he stood in the kitchen tent between me and the door, with his back to the down-river side of the glade, where Uncle Daniel was sitting, smoking; and I felt I couldn't bear to be alone with him one more minute. I moved to pass



him as quietly and indifferently as I could—and instead I really and truly grabbed him by both arms.

"Nicky!" I just squeaked. "Oh, Nicky!"

"What?" Nicky whispered. "My sweet, what is it?"

I couldn't care what he'd called me. I grabbed him harder with one hand and pointed over his shoulder with the other at the trees behind Uncle Daniel.

"It's the Indian—the awful, dreadful Indian!"

"What Indian?" Only I don't think he really heard me. He just stood looking at me in the queerest, most heavenly way.

"Behind you—behind Uncle Danny—just as I saw him this morning," I gasped; and then my wits came back to me. "Turn quietly and don't speak to Uncle Danny, but look behind him—in the bushes. There's an Indian hiding in them, with his face all painted!"

"Painted!" Nicky said sharply, and turned as he spoke. But he was too late. What I thought I had seen in the twilight was gone, just like what I thought I had seen in the sunlight. But I simply had to come out with the whole story of them. I supposed Nicky would tell me I'd been seeing ghosts, but he didn't. He only strolled across the glade into the thick bush, and he was gone for ages. I was ashamed to mention his errand to Uncle Daniel. I lit his reading lamp and the camp lanterns, and waited for Nicky to come back. But when he did, he shook his head.

"No Indian," he announced shortly. "I think you did imagine him. But you've had enough of being left alone out here! I wouldn't have gone off to-day if I hadn't been afraid—I mean I thought you didn't want me round much." I had seen him check himself, and I felt as if it was not what he had been going to say, but he went on quite easily: "But you'll play about

with me—to-morrow! Said anything to——" He nodded to where Uncle Daniel was writing in his tent.

I said I hadn't really had anything to say, except that I'd been scared. And Nicky looked at me in a thoughtful sort of way.

"Perhaps not," he agreed. "But I've something to say to you, Angelica! First, you finish reading that letter of Edith's before you go to bed, if you don't want me to tell you what's in it—and I'll say the rest in the morning!"

I forgot all about my silly, imaginary Indian; it took all I could do just to stand there. I simply wouldn't tell him that the wind had blown that letter away and that I couldn't read it if I wanted to; and I would rather have died than let him tell me what was in it, like when he was going to be married, and what Edith was going to wear.

"I don't know that I really want to hear you say *anything*," I said when I could speak; and I didn't even know I was going to cry till I had dropped my tent flap between me and him. But the first thing Nicky asked, when I came out in the morning and found him waiting breakfast for me, was if I had read Edith's horrible letter.

I said no. Nicky didn't say anything. Uncle Daniel had gone off somewhere, and we finished breakfast, and still Nicky didn't say anything. I began to feel as if I must talk or scream.

"I thought you had something you wanted to say to me," I burst out indignantly.

"I had—if you'd read Edith's letter." Nicky smiled suddenly, in the way he has, with his head thrown back and looking at you from under his black eyelashes. "Now I've changed my mind about it! You're going to be a sister to me, till your Indians come—and I go. Then"—something like dark lightning flashed out in his gray eyes and made me jump—"I'm going to write you a letter myself, and I'll see



*It was a dreadful, dreadful Indian, with his face painted black and red.*

that you read *that!* And now, Sister Anne, we'll go and play."

I got up perfectly meekly. Somehow I had never guessed Nicky could be masterful, and till that morning even I had never known how really nice he was. He was the most absolutely comfortable brother that ever was made—out of a brother-in-law. For three solid days I was utterly happy. I never knew what the bush was like till I was in it with Nicky French, who knew

every tree and every bird and every sound; and I never knew, either, what it was to be taken care of. I couldn't tell whether Nicky was happy or not. He had a drawn sort of look, and I knew he couldn't be sleeping well, because I used to hear him slipping away into the woods when Uncle Daniel and I had gone to bed and creeping back again in the gray of the morning, and once or twice he seemed absent-minded, as if he were listening for something.

Of course he might have been remembering Edith, but I didn't think of it because I forgot her. I forgot my queer, imaginary Indian, too; and half of the time I forgot Uncle Daniel, though afterward I remembered that if Nicky sometimes took me out of sight of him, he never took me out of hearing, and usually we both helped him with his digging till after lunch.

It was not the sort of digging Uncle Daniel had come for, though I haven't mentioned it till now. Back in the bush, on the upriver side of the glade, he had found an ancient burial place, with all sorts of interesting things in it, like stone tomahawks and knives and most enthralling skulls. Uncle Daniel had got so absorbed in them that he had never touched the glade that held the old council ground, where the Indians had tortured people between their seven sacrificial fires. I had not noticed that, particularly till Nicky spoke of it one evening as we sat waiting while Uncle Daniel got clean before dinner.

"Look here!" he said abruptly. "You have all the influence in the world with Mr. Westlake! I want you to make him promise he'll not touch this glade we're camped in or dig up any old altars till my men and your new ones get here. Think you can do it?"

"Stop him digging? I—expect so," I returned doubtfully. "Oh, of course he wouldn't dig if I really begged him not to. Only—I don't see why, Nicky."

"He does," Nicky retorted quite impatiently. "Only he won't listen to reason—from me! This glade we're camped in is a sort of holy ground to all the Indians for hundreds of miles around, and they don't want white men digging holes in it. The old burial place Mr. Westlake's grubbing in's a different matter—half of them don't know it's there. But this glade is where they used to hold their ceremonies and have magic fires and witchcraft—and they still have an Indian festival here

once a year, as they do at St. Anne's; only it's secret, because they have the forbidden dances. You persuade Uncle Daniel to let the place alone—for to-morrow, anyhow."

"Why to-morrow?"

"Oh, because I want to make sure—I mean the bacon's about out and I expect I'll have to go and fish for our living; and somehow I've a feeling I don't want the old gentleman to tackle ancient torture grounds alone," said Nicky carelessly. "I wouldn't have spoken about it, only I heard him say this morning that it'd be interesting to reconstruct ancient ceremonies or something, and he meant to dig a hole to-morrow to get his bearings. And I want you to be sure and stop him."

I said I would. But, as it happened, I didn't need to. Uncle Daniel got up next morning with just enough sciatica to keep him from wanting to dig up anything. He groaned and read a novel. Nicky went off fishing by himself. I didn't do anything. It was a queer, overcast day, and so hot that the tin plates burned like fire when you touched them, though there was only a veiled sort of sunlight. There was a hush over everything, too, as if it were going to thunder and the whole world were waiting for it.

I felt like melting away, but the heat seemed to revive Uncle Daniel. He said his sciatica was thawing out, though he didn't feel easy enough to dig yet. But after lunch he began to potter round the glade, picking up sticks and things, and suddenly he called me over to where he stood with a big armful of bark, and held something out to me.

"This seems to be yours—found it stuck behind a log where I was getting stuff for my fires," he said.

But I never asked him what he meant about fires, for the white envelope he gave me was Edith's lost letter!

I went straight into my tent, and read it.

I think I only did it because Nicky didn't seem to care any more whether I read it or not. But the second I turned its first page I felt as if I'd got to heaven—after trying the other place first by being a cowardly fool when I was alone, and an obstinate one after Nicky had come up the Belle Yvonne after me. Because that was just what he had done; and it was all in Edith's letter. For over the page from that "As for Nicky," which was as far as I'd read before, was:

As for Nicky, I was a perfect idiot to think he cared for me, or that I wanted to marry him. It was you he cared for, even when you went off as you did without leaving a message for him. So I've told him where you and Uncle Daniel are, and he's going to start out and hunt the Belle Yvonne River for you. And I do hope you'll understand it now, and forgive me for being so horrid about him. I forgot to put in that it is Walter Evans I'm going to marry. You can remember him if you try. He's rather bald, but he has lots more money than Nicky even, and is twice as easy to manage.

All I could think of was how I was ever to straighten things out with Nicky. I couldn't give Edith away, of course, but I could go out and tell Nicky I'd just imagined he cared for her, as I'd imagined my painted Indians. I jumped up to go and do it—and then I stood still.

Nicky wasn't there to tell! He was out on the river, fishing, and there was going to be a fearful, awful thunderstorm, for the tent had gone black dark at three in the afternoon, so suddenly that I couldn't even see Edith's big signature to the letter I had in my hand. I simply dived out of the door, and I stood there as if something had held me.

The world looked perfectly awful. The air was olive green, and as heavy as hot oil, and the trees around the glade were black. I can never say how horrible the whole glade looked, but the worst part was the pool in the middle

of it. It was blood red and just *shining* at me; and it was a second before I saw why.

Uncle Daniel had lit seven fires, at those seven points he had swept his hand around the day Nicky's old Indian had jumped. They were bright scarlet in the livid-green gloom, and it was the blood-red reflection from them that was lighting up the pool. That was all I saw at first. Then I saw Uncle Daniel, digging like mad at the opposite side of the pool; and with that and the fires, I knew he must be reconstructing ancient ceremonies, as Nicky had told me not to let him do.

But before I could shriek at him to stop, I saw something else. The glade was every bit of a hundred yards wide, so that you had a clear view of the sky, and what made me look up to it I don't know. All I did know was that there wasn't any sky. There was only a copper-colored roof, flat down on the trees, with a sort of black core in the middle of it, which suddenly began to swirl and circle together into a long black funnel, with the big end of it down to the glade.

It looked exactly as if it were reaching for Uncle Daniel and me, which was frightening enough. But suddenly, in two places at once, I saw something worse. At both ends of the glade, creeping on me from behind and creeping on Uncle Daniel from behind, bent double, were two awful, half-naked Indians, painted black and red, their oiled shoulders gleaming sulphur and blood-colored in the reflections from the livid sky and Uncle Daniel's seven fires.

I suppose what I ought to have done was to have yelled to Uncle Danny and run for the river and Nicky, but I never thought of it. I just flew like a stone out of a catapult straight at the eyes of the Indian nearest to Uncle Daniel. But before I could reach him, I saw him go down as if something had hit him; and I never even saw the second one,

for something had hit me, so hard I couldn't believe it was wind. I had just sense enough to grab Uncle Daniel when something grabbed me and him and flung the two of us flat into the low bush at the side of the glade.

"Lie down!" said Nicky.

I hadn't seen him anywhere, and I didn't know where he had come from, but I stopped clutching Uncle Daniel and clutched him instead. And then the whole world was blotted out in noise and darkness and battering wind, but I felt perfectly safe. My face was against Nicky's shoulder, and his arm was tight around me. He said something that began with "darling," but I didn't answer him properly. I said I never had been a sister to him, never; even before I had read Edith's letter; and that I truly hadn't been an obstinate pig, only that it had blown away and I couldn't find it; and that I'd thought she meant she was engaged to him instead of Walter Evans. And how on earth had Nicky known what was in it?

"Because I made her read it to me before she sent it away," said Nicky, so matter-of-factly that I remembered Uncle Daniel and sat up.

It was pouring, pelting rain still, so cold that it felt like ice, but the wind had stopped. The light came back daz-zlingly. I saw Nicky, dripping; and Uncle Daniel, rather dazed; and then what had been the glade. The rain had put out Uncle Daniel's fires, or the whole thing would have gone up in one blaze. It was just piled up with broken trees and branches, and our tents, and everything we owned, till it might have been chaos, or some queer kind of a haystack. And suddenly it struck me that I didn't see something else.

"The—the Indians—" I got out.

"They're gone," said Nicky calmly. "And they won't be back, for if ever any Indians got hoist with their own petard, they did! I hit one of them,

but it was the wind that did the business."

"The wind!"

Nicky nodded. "They were just your men who'd deserted you, dressed up. I rather knew they were round somewhere, even before you saw two of them, and that they meant to try something on. You see, that morning I met them going off with your canoes just before I met you, they yelled out to my two Indians that they were going to hide up in the woods and cure a white man of profaning their sacred relics—and of course they never guessed another white man would understand!"

"Andrew told me, that day you heard me talking to him in Indian, that those queer gusts of wind here are supposed to be just spirits arriving to protect the glade; and that if any one dared to re-light the fires in the places where they had the seven altars, the same spirits would come and destroy them and the glade, too. I promised him I wouldn't let Uncle Daniel try it, but it seems to me it's just as well he did. Your men got a lesson they won't forget in a hurry, thanks to that and the coincidence of a local cloudburst. I bet they're paddling down the river now till their backs are cracking!"

"You don't mean that—if you hadn't come—they would have *killed* us!" I exclaimed.

"No," said Nicky shortly; but suddenly he went dead white. "My heavens, Angelica, I thought I'd never get back to you," he let out. "You see, I really did go fishing, because I thought Uncle Daniel was safe for the day with that Heaven-sent sciatica, and, besides, I'd quartered this bush at nights till I was nearly certain those fool Indians had left the first evening you told me about them. Then, an hour ago, away across the river, I saw them crawling up from the shore in all their imitation, ghost-Indian war paint,



and I—nearly didn't get here in time. It wasn't my coming saved you from them. It was the wind."

Both of us had forgotten Uncle Daniel; Nicky certainly had, or he would never have said that about his sciatica. And suddenly we both of us saw him, standing up and simply glaring at us.

"Why on earth, Nicky French, didn't you tell me those most interesting and important facts about those Indians and

the seven fires before?" he shouted furiously.

Nicky looked at him. "I think, sir, it was because I was too much taken up with Sister Anne." But his look turned into a stare, which it wouldn't have done if he'd known antiquarians. "You don't mean you—believe in that wind story?" he gasped, and I nipped his arm.

For I knew Uncle Daniel probably did.



### How Women Look at Plays

THE method employed by a woman in looking at a play is vastly different from that of a man, and for this reason women are far more strongly affected by the drama than are men. Such is the verdict of one of New York's most famous nerve specialists, and he describes the emotional processes involved as follows:

A man hears the lines and watches the situations in a play and enjoys in an impersonal way the appeals to his various emotions. A woman, on the other hand, cannot go to the theater in an impersonal frame of mind. Every woman immediately projects herself from the audience to the stage and puts herself in the place of the heroine. Throughout the entire performance, she is the heroine, and all the things that happen are happening to her.

The serious plays, the melodramas of the emotions, are the ones that make women our patients. They see an unhappy wife and say to themselves: "I am unhappy in just that way. Why can't I work out my own salvation, just as she is doing?" Or they see a poor woman carving out a career in the world, and turn around in their minds the question: "Why should I submit to my poverty and privation when, by disregarding the wishes of my parents, I can become independent and happy?" After they have thought about these things long enough, the inevitable result is brought about. They become nervous wrecks. Worry is a great wrecker of nerves.

Women, like children, are intensely imitative. And, being imitative, they can put themselves in other people's places with astounding ease. That, I believe, is why there are so many more good actresses than there are good actors. Also, since they are imitative, they are played upon and preyed upon by the emotions they see depicted upon the stage. They live those emotions, and set themselves up as targets upon which the stage sensations can work. This is why I have among my patients women who, before they go to see a new play, call me up on the telephone and inquire whether it would do them any harm to witness it.

Sometimes I say yes, and sometimes no. In order to be able to give the right answer, I have to be an amateur dramatic critic, but it pays, because it enables me to prevent a good many cases of nervous prostration and even separate families and broken homes.



# Managing Mothers and Others

By Hildegard Lavender

Author of "Doing Good," "For the Rainy Day," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY LAURA E. FOSTER

WHEN the doctor joins the tea-table group of her intimates, there is apt to be, as the bride puts it, "something doing." More appropriately it might be said that there is likely to be "something saying." For the doctor's everyday experiences lie outside the realm of affairs familiar to the rest of the little coterie, and her appearance stimulates thought and expression along new lines. Moreover, there is about the doctor's manner of reporting her experiences and of commenting upon them a certain downright-ness that always provokes discussion—sometimes intelligent discussion.

The other afternoon she came in with a grim look upon her handsome features and an aggressive pose in her tall, muscular figure. She planted her instrument case upon the floor with a sort of vindictive emphasis, and there was positive belligerency in her tone as she stated exactly how she would take her tea.

"I should judge, from the medical manner," said the tea-pourer, railing, "that our friend has been in the slums, trying to heal with her little assortment of boluses and pills the ills inflicted by our anachronistic industrial system, or our undeveloped social system, or something of that sort. Come, my dear! Relieve your mind. Un-

burden your soul. Get it off your chest! What is it this time? A plasterer out of work and his large family suffering manifold diseases which are the result simply of poverty? Or a bruised wife, beaten to a pulp by an inebriate husband who would have been perfectly sober if he had received a decent living wage? Out with it!"

The doctor glowered upon the scoffer. "Wrong. Absolutely and entirely wrong. You're indiscriminating, my dear Mrs. Tea-pourer. You can't distinguish between expressions at all. No, this time the capitalistic system has nothing whatever to do with my gloom. I haven't been anywhere near the slums, as you call them. I've been in a house not unlike this one. A comfortable, fairly prosperous, middle-class abode," ended the doctor, with a certain evident pleasure in her characterization. Then she added idly: "I wonder why it is that every one of us so bitterly resents the implication of being middle class."

"I'm sure I don't," replied the hostess suavely, although she had flushed a trifle upon hearing the adjective. "I don't resent being told I'm middle class any more than I resent being told that I have brown hair. Good, serviceable things, both of them. But go on about



*"I should judge from the medical manner," said the tea-pourer, railing, "that our friend has been in the slums."*

the sins of the bourgeoisie, the thought of which was corrugating your brow when you came in."

"I've been visiting a patient whose mother I'd like to shake, although it's too late in the day for that to do any good," replied the doctor between sips of orange pekoe and munches of plum cake. "A perfectly nice girl withering away upon the parent bough, and all because of her mother's criminal neglect. Yes, criminal!" The doctor was emphatic about it.

"What has mother failed to do?"

"She has failed to make the slightest attempt to marry off her daughter," was the answer.

The bride looked up, all protest.

"Surely," she exclaimed, in distressed tones, "you don't approve of those wretched, arranged marriages, engineered by parents, based upon something else than love?"

"I approve of a woman's being trained for some position," was the vigorous answer. "And marriage is the job that the majority of them still undertake."

"Oh, you mean that they ought to be trained to know how to run a house, how to market, how to manage the servants, and all that!" The bride was relieved. Here was no black heresy against the dearest tenet of her creed.

"I don't mean anything of the kind," snapped the doctor. "I mean that if well-to-do parents, with daughters of domestic taste and no other very obvious 'leadings,' don't try to find matrimonial openings for those daughters, they are false to their trust. That's what I mean. Take this girl that I've just been called in to attend. She isn't a very young girl any longer—she's past thirty. She was an only child. And her father and mother had the customary American, middle-class idea that mates for such are provided direct from Heaven. So they never took the trouble to look around among their

acquaintances for a desirable young man for the girl to fall in love with.

"Oh, I can see"—she nodded to the bride—"that there's got to be the thing you call romantic love at the basis of a happy marriage. But what I am finding fault about is this—that that mother never took the slightest pains to find an object for her daughter's romantic love. She brought her up with no other interests and occupations than the purely domestic, and then she doesn't disturb herself in the least to provide her with a good domestic position. She herself is a capable woman of fifty-five, and she hasn't the slightest intention of handing over her household affairs to her daughter.

"So there's the girl, her freshness gone, her time a weariness to her from sheer lack of work, her emotions wasted, turned back upon herself—poisoning her. A nervous collapse is what I called it. I'm a coward, too, like all the rest of the world—a hidebound, conventional coward! I didn't dare to say to the mother and the girl: 'What she—what you—are suffering from is the lack of an outlet for your emotions and energies; the lack of a husband and children and a house of your own and a cook to worry over, and a case of midnight croup to frighten you half to death, and your husband's insurance premium to be met out of savings on the butcher's bill, and all the rest of it.' I didn't have the courage to say that to the girl or her mother. But it was the truth, just the same."

"Well, even if it is the truth," insisted the bride indignantly—in all the tea-table discussions she was the champion of the romantic view of life—"I don't see how that proves that her mother was to blame. What do you know about her, anyway? She may have been in love with some one years ago. She may be in love with him still! Would you have her false to her ideal emotion for the sake of owning a cook-

stove of her own on which she could expend her pent-up energies?"

"I almost think I would," replied the doctor grimly. "But, as it happens, your supposition is all off. I may be fairly cowardly about telling my patients things, but I do endeavor to learn a little about them before prescribing. And as far as I have been able to discover, that girl never even had what we used to call a 'beau' in my young days. And she's been brought up in such a thoroughly refined and inhuman way that she hasn't really felt the lack of one, or at any rate hasn't known that she felt it."

"No, what I tell you is true. That mother, like tens of thousands of other mothers, would have considered it indelicate, mercenary, vulgar, to have begun, sixteen or seventeen years ago, to cast around among her acquaintances for those with sons likely to prove eligible as husbands. She felt, with the bride here, that the world was neatly arranged on the affinity system—a system of Heaven-sent mates, to be encountered miraculously. So she calmly shifted her responsibilities on to Heaven. She made no effort after an eligible list of young men—and here's her daughter wasting away of pure ennui!"

"Well," remarked the bride, still indignant, "I think it a great deal better that one daughter, or a thousand daughters, for that matter, should waste away from pure ennui, as you put it, than that the American mothers of what you call the middle class should make a business of marrying off their daughters, as the fashionable women are supposed to do. There isn't anything more revolting than one of those managing mammas. There's nothing in literature more bitter than Thackeray's description of those Englishwomen of the upper classes who take their daughters to the marriage market and dispose of them to the highest bidder. Better

an epidemic of neurasthenia, or whatever you call it, than the introduction of such a system as that among us!"

"Bravo! Bravo!" chorused the group. But the doctor would not be put down.

"Just listen to reason, will you? I'm not advocating any sale of beautiful maidens to highest bidders. I'm only saying this: that unless a girl is brought up with some other occupation than those resulting from matrimony, it's a crime not to put her in the way of getting a good matrimonial position. If she doesn't know any boys, any young men, how on earth is she to find this affinity that you sentimentalists are so sure exists for her? Of course, some girls do find them without parental assistance—and very often that's the beginning of tragedy."

"What does it mean when a girl 'picks up' a young man? It means that instinct is trying to overcome some of the limitations of society; it means that nature, badly advised, is trying to obtain for her what her parents ought to have obtained for her in a legitimate manner—masculine acquaintances. I declare that the actual bargaining and bartering of the French in a matter of the marriage of their children seems to me better and wiser than the calm, indolent ignoring of the whole business among American mothers and fathers. I declare I think that the Jewish girl or boy on the East Side who goes and pays a professional matchmaker to find a suitable husband or wife is behaving more wisely than the refined American household which waits for Heaven to send the match."

"Of course, in small communities, where there is constant intercourse among all the young people, where everybody knows everybody else, it is all right to leave the matter to chance or to fate. There, girls and boys are thrown together from the time they are children, grow up knowing all about





"And here's her daughter wasting away of pure ennui!"

one another, and find their 'affinities' without trouble. Affinities are a matter of juxtaposition! But in a big city, where the acquisition of a social circle is really a matter of labor, of slow growth, it certainly behooves parents of young daughters to have an eye to the desirability of a few young men on the list.

"To-day I am inclined to award the palm for motherly wisdom and affection to the competent, managing mamma who has her daughter's marriage in

mind almost from the moment of her daughter's birth, who educates her to be attractive, who provides a proper background for her when she is grown up, who introduces her to as large a circle of desirable people as is possible, who dresses her charmingly, who restrains her exuberance when that is too great, who injects sparkle and zest into her when she is too tame—who does everything she can, in short, to get her well settled in her profession."

"Of course you are talking awful rubbish," interpolated some one.

"I am not!" heatedly affirmed the doctor. "If you bring a girl up to another profession than matrimony, all well and good. Then the openings that you seek for her will be in the profession for

which she has been educated. But if you bring her up for what still remains the most popular feminine calling, for Heaven's sake give her a chance to get an opening in it!"

"I know a managing mamma," began a matron in the group, thereby shutting off the bride's declaration that she would die if she thought a daughter of hers could ever be "hawked about." "I know a managing mamma. Would you like to know about the results of her management?"

They all said that they would; the doctor saying it, however, with a somewhat hostile air.

"The managing mamma of my tale undoubtedly holds our dear doctor's views, although I doubt if she ever formulated them. She has two daughters. Neither of them has betrayed any aptitude for any business or has shown any gleams of talent. They are nice enough girls, good looking, well mannered. And mamma is really a general—a general," she pursued reflectively, "with many a Waterloo to her record. She was left a widow when her daughters were both under fifteen. She herself was an attractive woman and a very capable one. She decided to marry again and to marry in a way to give her girls the advantages they would lack on her own means.

"She did exactly what she had planned to do. She married an excellent gentleman of assured position, of substantial fortune, of kindly heart. And then she proceeded to manage and maneuver. She sent the girls to a finishing school where they would meet the sort of girls whose brothers she would wish them to marry. She inquired with the utmost care concerning the family of every friend they acquired—what its position was, what its income, and especially what its masculine constituents were. The girls with brothers were always sure of the warmest possible welcome from her, even if her daughters were sometimes less cordial.

"As for the boys, never was there a mature woman so hospitable to those fledglings. She was very canny, to be sure, in weeding out the entirely ineligible, but she admitted enough to insure for her daughters, from their panteletted age onward, a stimulating appearance of popularity. She had observed, and had used with shrewdness the results of her observation, the fact that the masculine human being is greatly given to treading the path that

his fellows have already worn toward feminine doors. It was therefore one of the principles of her campaign that while desirable boys, boys who would eventually become good matches, were greatly to be sought and were to be prized above rubies, less brilliant specimens might serve a very useful purpose.

"At her house, in the days before the girls were formally 'out,' there was always cheer and gayety for the other girls and boys—especially the boys. Her piano was never too precious an instrument for the clumsiest and noisiest of fingers. Her ears were never too sensitive for the strains of 'Updee' or 'Old Solomon Levi,' vociferated by the uncertain throats of boys from the preparatory school. Even her husband's billiard table was not too sacred an object for the assaults of the youngsters. And there was always cake and hot chocolate at the close of the evening's festivities.

"In the summer she spread a net for these young flies, equally well smeared with sweets to their taste. The girls with brothers and the boys without sisters were made so welcome at her country place! Her tennis courts were always in the pink of condition, her piazzas full of the most comfortable chairs, the number of her canoes always delightfully adequate to the number of her guests. It is incalculable, the times she was obliged to change cooks on account of the faultfinding of those potentates over the daily batches of cookies and the daily pitchers of lemonade for the hot and hungry hordes of despoilers. And the fact that she quarreled with her brother-in-law, though there were financial expectations from him, rather than subdue the loud voices of a sophomoric band at cards in the evening, is well known.

"Through all the gayety that she engineered for them, her two daughters moved rather like puppets. They were



*"Her piano was never too precious an instrument for the clumsiest and noisiest of fingers.*

not by nature very lively girls, and they would have preferred a dull, bookish seclusion to the whirl in which she

forced them to live. However, they were not the stuff of which rebels are made, and they submitted to her rule

with sufficient mildness. As they grew older, they probably even used a certain amount of consciousness and intelligence in forwarding her aims. They disposed of themselves as gracefully as possible against the backgrounds of her making; they wore the pretty gowns of her choice and design; they talked the chatter and displayed the accomplishments that she had taught them to believe their greatest social asset.

"Probably the only trouble was that all the boys and the young men, with the cruel keenness of youth, saw that the girls were merely worked by strings in mother's hand and were diabolically aware of mother's intentions. Now, while it is one of the indisputable axioms of social philosophy that men are like sheep and flock where they see other men flocking, it remains another equally indisputable axiom that they like to think of themselves as the pursuing sex, and develop the greatest possible agility in evading the too open pursuit of the fair."

The narrator paused in her tale. "Well," said the Tea Table briskly, "what's the end of your story? Did mother succeed, or didn't she? Was the managing mamma as great a failure as those slack mothers whom the doctor has been attacking—those ladies who expect to see husbands for their daughters deposited at their door by some supernal agency, as children look for baby brothers and sisters?"

"I think she was just as great a failure as the class of mothers whom the doctor so detests," was the reply. "One of the girls did, indeed, succeed in marrying—if 'succeed' is the right word to use in connection with the event. She married an excellent New York name, a vacant mind, a wit too dull to perceive that its owner was being angled for, a set of expensive tastes, and an entirely depleted bank account. If the bank account had not been depleted," added the chronicler satirically,

"the rest of the attributes would have been snatched up along with it by the daughter of a cleverer general yet than the lady whose history I am relating to you. But as it was, my heroine's oldest girl succeeded in capturing this prize for which there was little competition, and they live on the fringe of fashion—a pair of little relatives of the rich—supported, when they are not sponging upon his family connections, by her people. As for the other girl, she never succeeded in finding quite so stupid a fly, and she is still at home weaving her web in vain."

"But what is the moral of it all?" asked some one, almost tearfully. "Here comes the doctor and declares that all mothers who do not consciously, deliberately, and intelligently lay plans for their daughters' marriages are criminals. And here comes our wise matron, seeming to declare that all mothers who do deliberately lay such plans are also criminals. I have a daughter five years old—I should like some real instruction."

"I can give you the real instruction," struck in the grandmother of the group. "And I cannot help thinking it curious that none of the rest of you have guessed it. It is a modern idea—but perhaps it takes a person as old as I am to have seen enough of the misery of old ways to come to a belief in the new. Don't let your girls regard matrimony as a profession any more than you let your boys regard it so. Educate them all for useful lives, for lives of service, whether in the professions, the arts, the trades, or the handicrafts, and let them express their personalities through these to the fullest possible extent."

"The conservatives talk a great deal about woman's entrance into the industries and into the outside life of the world as a blow at romantic love. Believe me, no such blow has ever been struck at romantic love as the theory

that marriage is the universal profession for women. People trained for certain professions struggle to get jobs in them—that is all there is about it. A woman trained solely for matrimony and domesticity may or may not fall in love; she is bound to do her utmost to secure an opening in her profession. Man, trained to be a doctor or lawyer, a bricklayer, a gardener, may fall romantically in love. Calculations of self-interest, of advancement, need have no weight in his emotional life. He is secure of his living whomever he marries; he is equally secure of it if he remains single. Not one sordid thought

need be mixed with his affection. That must be the ideal held up for women also. To discover the bent of a daughter's abilities, to train them so that they shall be the greatest pleasure to her and the greatest service to the world—that's as fine a task as any mother, managing or otherwise, can set herself."

"Well, meantime," persisted the doctor grimly, "until your millennium is ushered in, I'm for a system of marriage brokers for the sake of the young women who have been trained to no career except marriage, and whose parents have reprehensibly neglected to find them an opening in that one."

### The Smoke Tree

STILL crowned with filmy bloom, though bent and old,  
 It fills its nook, this tree some wit of France  
 Likened to gray-wigged courtiers, bright and bold;  
 Those pretty masters, fluttering down the dance,  
 Whose deep salutes and twirls  
 Shook powder from their curls,  
 When knights were brave and maidens meek of glance.  
 But other eyes have seen the curl of smoke  
 In that soft bloom, rose gray, as pigeons be,  
 Or ashes of pink roses—such as broke  
 Their bush last June—or wood fires' breath, set free  
 When on the hearth one lays  
 The autumn twigs, to blaze  
 And urge the cricket on to minstrelsy.  
 So slighted, now, its charms, that one but sees  
 Its cloudy boughs in gardens overgrown,  
 Where peony and iris scent the breeze  
 And box rims round the old thick lawns, half mown,  
 And arbors, bent o'ermuch,  
 Sink in the hoyden clutch  
 Of romping vines that clamber as they please.  
 It fits, this smoke tree, into such a scene.  
 It suits June's long, reluctant-going days  
 With frail new moons at sunset and the sheen  
 Of limpid wests—a narrow cloud that strays  
 Like some thin shred of shell  
 The sea has tossed too well—  
 With old, fair flowers, old friendships, and old ways!

JEANNIE PENDLETON EWING.





# The Fortunes of Mattie Miller

By Helen R. Martin

Author of "Barnabetta," "Tillie, a Mennonite Maid," "The Parasite," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT A. GRAEF

## CHAPTER XXV.

WHEN, on the following Monday morning, Miss Jenkins met her principal in the schoolroom, with a look at once keen and appraising, he instantly suspected that Baldy had betrayed to her who he was—perhaps who they both were. Her demeanor all that day confirmed this suspicion. She watched him at every opportunity warily, narrowly; and when, at the close of the afternoon session, he walked with her to the Swan, he still felt her cautious scrutiny.

He endeavored to entrap her into betraying her knowledge.

"Well, how do you like my friend, Mr. Yutzy?"

"He looks like his name."

"From the lavish manner in which you bestowed your delightful society upon him, I should think that reply would not adequately express your evidently extravagant admiration of him."

"I especially admire his figure. And his curls. And his necktie."

"Your memory for these little details would prove——"

"'Little details'! His figure! His crop of curls! He's a chromo!"

"Yet you led him on to suppose——"

"To suppose what?"

"Well, if you didn't admire him, why

on earth did you drag him all over Lancaster County with you?"

"I drag him!"

"Well, then, why did you yield to his enticements and go with him, if you think him a chromo? I've always thought you so sincere."

"I never told him I admired his style of dress and figure and his awful curls."

"Then," said Oliver tentatively, "you tolerate his oddities as the eccentricities of genius?"

"Is he a genius?"

"You ought to know by this time; you saw enough of him to find out."

"I'm too unfamiliar with the species—geniuses, I mean—to recognize them when I meet them."

Well, if she knew, he could not make her betray herself.

When he left her at the Swan, he stopped in the barroom of the hotel to call up Starr on the long distance. As the landlord was using the telephone, Oliver was obliged to wait a few minutes.

"Hello!" the stalwart Mr. Gunzenhauser of the Swan was bellowing into the receiver. "Who'd you say? Mr. Potter, is it? It ain't no sich a person here. Who? Oh, Oliver? The high-school principal? Well, he don't board here. No, this here ain't Slabaugh's Drug Store. You better look your number better up! He's——"

*The first installment of this story appeared in the October number of SMITH'S.*

Oliver quickly made his presence known, and took the landlord's place at the telephone.

It was Starr's voice he heard at his ear.

"I'm sorry to tell you, Ed, I can't come to see you next Friday."

"To see *me*!"

"I have to go to Philadelphia to see my—aunt."

"A coincidence, Baldy—Miss Jenkins has just told me she's going to spend the week-end in Philadelphia with her—aunt. Shall I send you her address there, so you can—if your aunt will spare you—look her up, perhaps?"

"Oh, you needn't bother, thanks!"

"Why didn't you *write* you weren't coming? Why this haste?"

"But there's something else. I've been worried, Ed, about some bad advice I gave you. I want to take it back. I beg you to reconsider your determination—made at my instigation—to marry for money. Now that I know what love is——"

"My 'determination'?" repeated Oliver questioninglly.

"It was bad advice, Ed. Mistaken advice. I only now realize how mistaken!"

"Of course, Baldy, I'll never marry without your consent. Say! I was just about to call *you* up concerning something that worries *me*. On your honor now—did you *tell*? Does she *know*—you and me?"

"I swear, Ed, I didn't tell. Your secret is intact."

"She doesn't—smell a rat?"

"If she does, she succeeded in concealing it from *me*."

When Oliver turned from the telephone, he saw at his side the lawyer from Lancaster, who had been in town all day upon Uncle Jo's affairs.

Our friend, on his homeward walk, reflected upon Starr's anxiety as to the "mistaken advice" he had once given him. Instead of associating it in any

way with his assistant, it immediately connected itself in his mind with the presence in the village of the Lancaster lawyer.

"Is Baldy afraid I'm getting too fond of little Mattie? And does he suspect—what I'm beginning to *know*—that old Jo has more money than he's letting on he has? It *costs* something to keep a busy lawyer out here all day—more than Jo can afford, I'm afraid, even if he does have a nice little sum to leave to that dear child. I'd be damned glad for her if he did leave her a few thousands! Wouldn't I grind it into her father and stepmother!" he thought viciously, for somehow he found himself in a rather vicious mood to-night.

As for Starr's unnecessary anxiety lest he rashly make a *mésalliance* by marrying the village blacksmith's daughter—it did sound poetically romantic, or perhaps romantically poetic—he'd better look to himself!

"It wouldn't be nearly so apt to prove a *mésalliance* as his own entanglement with that little flirt that's got *him* dangling. Going to meet him in Philadelphia next Saturday! Hell!"

In the next few days, however, some rumors reached Oliver that roused his chivalrous indignation in behalf of Miss Jenkins. It was said that the school board might take action against her at their next meeting for her giddy behavior in running about so madly for nearly three days, not to say nights, with a strange man who had put up at the hotel. Such conduct was especially unseemly in one holding the dignified position of high-school assistant.

"They'll meebly ast fur her resignation, yet," Mrs. Miller informed him one day at dinner, with placid satisfaction at the prospect of Miss Jenkins' humiliation; for she had several times recently seen her out walking after school hours with Mattie, and the sight had filled her with jealousy that her hated stepdaughter should be on such

friendly terms with the "highest" lady in Adamstown; that she should now have opportunities and leisure that had been denied her under her father's roof; that she should be wearing a good jacket suit and a stylish hat purchased with her stepmother's brother's money! It was all intolerably galling. The fact that Mr. Oliver—*her* boarder—stayed with Jo to give Mattie a chance to go out with Miss Jenkins was an added bitterness. Yes, Mrs. Miller knew, in her heart, that she would be very glad when Jo's end came and the tormenting presence of her stepdaughter be removed forever from the village and from her life and that of her son and husband.

Mattie's departure from the Miller household had seemed to Oliver to leave such a bleak dreariness therein that he wondered whether it could be possible that her father did not also feel it. The girl certainly created an atmosphere—an atmosphere that he felt most soothingly whenever he went now into Uncle Jo's decrepit little cottage.

Although Oliver did all he could to further the friendship between Mattie and Miss Jenkins, he found himself, to his own self-disgust, absurdly jealous of Mattie's enthusiastic admiration of the teacher.

"Have I the disposition of a despotic Grand Turk?" He tried to shake off his obsession, his passionate desire for exclusive possession of the young girl's interest.

"I didn't know," Mattie told him one day, "that one life *could* be so crowded with great and good things as hers has been! Why, Mr. Oliver, she's been all over Europe!"

"She has? She never told me that."

When he tried, the next time he was alone with Miss Jenkins, to draw her out on the subject of her travels, she was mysteriously elusive. Unlike most of her sex, she certainly knew how to hold her own counsel.

He also found himself entirely unable, after her return from her week-end in Philadelphia, to draw from her any least hint as to her rendezvous there with Starr.

All during the following week she seemed unusually quiet, even a bit pensive—until one morning a telegram from Starr announced that the artist was coming to spend Saturday and Sunday with him in Adamstown. The next time Oliver saw Miss Jenkins, she was radiant.

When Friday night came, he decided that it was unnecessary and indeed inadvisable that he should take the trouble to meet the stagecoach on which Starr would arrive. However, as the hour drew near, he did find himself strolling down the street toward the post office. But when, from a block away, he saw Miss Jenkins on the sidewalk, eagerly scanning the road on which the stage would presently appear, he concluded that his presence would be *de trop*.

"But surely," he reflected on his homeward walk, "she must by this time know who he is. And if he hasn't given *me* away, it's not like him. To have reached as intimate a footing as this with a girl and not have confided to her all the hopes and fears of all his past, present, and future, wouldn't be Baldy. Subtlety and secretiveness would be about as natural to him as straight yellow hair. Unless, indeed, he's trying out an experiment—the novelty of being pursued for himself instead of for his fame. I wonder!"

He returned to the solitude of his room in a state of mental depression to which he quite abandoned himself—rejecting even the consolation he might have derived from a visit to the cottage of Uncle Jo.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

Oliver saw nothing of Starr that evening, nor all day Saturday. The

news spread through the village, and, of course, reached his ears, that Miss Jenkins was again "tearing around" with "the dark-eyed stranger."

It was on Sunday afternoon, after the heavy noon dinner at the hotel, that these two, who, unknown to themselves,

ion, "when I must make a confession to you."

"You've had 'a past,' have you? But it's what you are *now* that I would judge you by, Archibald. So, unless the story of your past is very entertaining, please spare me."

"It's not anything about myself, this confession. I have no confessions to make you about myself."

"Which doesn't mean, I hope, that I'm your first and only love? Don't tell me, Archibald, that you've been as tame a creature as that all your life! If you have, I'm glad I've refused you five times!"



*She treated him with a deference due his genius and his great reputation; she let him catch her gazing at him with awe and admiration.*

were just now the chief topic of interest in the village, found themselves alone in the parlor of the Swan, seated together on a big, black haircloth sofa, resting from the pleasant fatigue of a long morning's drive.

"The time has come, Beatrice," Starr was solemnly informing his compan-

"I do affirm, Beatrice, that you are my first and only *real* love."

"*Real* love?" She nodded. "It's nice to have you think so," she said.

"But my confession. It's about a friend of mine whom I shall want to ask to be best man at our wedding."

"But I haven't *accepted* you yet!"

she protested. "On the contrary, I've refused you every time you've asked me so far."

"That's a mere formal detail. You and I are one, Beatrice, by the ruling of the gods."

"You think, then"—she sighed—"there's *no* escape for us?"

"Not the least hope. Don't waste any more time refusing me. I'm anxious to be engaged as soon as possible."

"It's so luxurious to keep refusing a celebrity—a real one, too, who is even bigger than his reputation. If I accept you, you'll stop proposing. And every time you propose, I get a thrill. When the novelty and thrill begin to wear off, I'll decide whether or not I want to marry a man who has curly hair. I *never* thought I'd come to that!"

"But when the curly head is a great painter's, Beatrice?"

"If only your hair were just wavy!" she lamented. "But tight, kinky, bushy curls all over your head! Archibald, you could certainly have those curls cut closer."

"I'd lose my reputation for being a genius."

"Well"—she resigned herself—"go ahead with your confession."

"About this friend of mine, Beatrice," he suddenly exploded.

"My goodness! What?"

"I've got him here in Adamstown now. I want to present him to you."

"You've got him here in—Archibald! You *know* I don't want it to get out that I am here! *Why* did you have him come here?"

"I didn't have him come here, dearest. He lives here."

"Lives *here*! Your best man? Oh!"

She leaned away from him, put her hand on his shoulder, and looked at him.

"You mean," she said slowly, "Mr. Oliver?"

"Mr. Oliver." He nodded. "You don't really know that man, Beatrice,

and he doesn't know you. I want to make you know each other. Only," he added hastily, "not too intimately."

Beatrice looked disturbed. She prided herself, to be sure, upon being democratic. But her condescension could hardly go so far as to have a village teacher figure as best man at her wedding—when she *might* have, for that conspicuous office, one of Archibald's many distinguished friends among the poets, novelists, painters, and actors of the day.

"I had hoped," she said pensively, "that perhaps you could get your friend, Edward O. Potter, to take the part. I didn't know you and Mr. Oliver were so intimate as this. I don't know that I'd care to have him as best man at our wedding, Archibald—if I do decide," she added, "to accept you. I'll say this, however: if you can get Mr. Potter for best man, I *will* accept you."

And it was at this dramatic moment that Oliver walked into the parlor of the Swan.

"Mr. Oliver"—Starr lost no time—"congratulate us—that is, me. We're just announcing our betrothal."

"Oh, we're not!" Beatrice cried. "We're not even engaged yet! I made a condition, Mr.—Yutzy!"

"The condition will be fulfilled," Starr exultantly exclaimed. "Old man"—he held out his hand to Oliver—"congratulate me!"

Oliver, mechanically yielding his hand, contemplated the pair before him for a moment, a slow, deep color rising to his forehead.

"Miss Jenkins," he said deliberately, "I feel it my duty to warn you—don't take Mr. Yutzy seriously. Only two short weeks ago, before he had met you, he was madly in love with a New York girl. I can give you her name and address."

"You can't prove anything by her, Oliver," retorted Starr, "for I never told her I loved her. I dared not!"



"You hear, Miss Jenkins? He admits that he loved her. Fickle, you see. And, Miss Jenkins, Mr. Yutzy doesn't make enough to keep you in the violets you fancy in the dead of winter. Perhaps he could afford in the spring to give you a bunch of field violets occasionally. But *he* couldn't buy you sable coats and Dresden china and Mexican lace and orange marmalade. Be warned!"

"Well, even without my Adamstown salary," answered Beatrice coolly, "I can afford these trifles for myself. Mr. Starr need not be anxious about my 'luxurious and frivolous tastes.'"

"Then you *know* him!" cried Oliver. "And you two are *serious*?"

"Miss Ford"—Starr jumped up and dramatically waved his plump hand—"may I present to you my friend, who, I hope, will act for us as best man—Mr. Edward Oliver Potter. Mr. Potter, Miss Beatrice Ford, of New York. Yes, Ed—Beatrice Ford."

Beatrice did not move. Her hand clutched the arm of the sofa. Her face turned white.

Oliver, looking apoplectic, sank into the nearest chair. For a moment a breathless silence hung upon them.

Neither of them listened as Starr began to pour forth an elaborate explanation. They sat—the while their hearts and pulses beat high—gazing at each other, absorbing every detail of each other. And the color did not return to Beatrice's face. She grew whiter.

Suddenly she rose. "Mr. Potter"—she bowed ironically, as the two men stood—"may I inquire how much longer you expect to keep up your clever little farce out here?"

"Until I have exhausted its possibilities, Miss Ford. And you?"

"I shall resign at the Christmas holidays. Will you excuse me now?" she asked ceremoniously, and, with a dignity touched with a delicate hauteur

that held Oliver and Starr rigidly unprotesting, she walked from the room.

Starr sank back limply upon the sofa from which he had risen.

"She resents it," he said miserably. "She's mad at *me*, too, for conniving with your fraud."

Oliver also reseated himself. "She'll get over it," he returned dully.

"She would if she loved me. I'm not sure she does."

"You announced your engagement."

"She's refused me, so far, five times. She says it's five times. I didn't count."

"You're not easily discouraged, are you? Asking me, under the circumstances and in her presence, to be your best man! I think I agree with Thackeray—I can't imagine myself asking a girl a second time to marry me!"

"Aw, you're jealous."

"Good Lord! Jealous of the honor of being *refused* by Miss Beatrice Ford! You're soft!"

"I don't care how often I ask her if I get her in the end."

"And you phoned from New York to tell me not to marry money!"

"The only thing that stands in the way of her accepting me, Ed, is—you! I'm sure of it."

"You're morbid. She never ran after *me*, Baldy—and look how she even schemed to meet you in Philadelphia! I haven't yet taken in and absorbed the idea that the little devil is Beatrice Ford, of New York. Gosh! It's a shock, Baldy."

"Think of *her* shock in discovering who *you* are! How do you suppose *she's* feeling?"

"I suppose," said Oliver thoughtfully, a smile playing about his mouth, "her feelings on the subject *are* rather complex and interesting."

"Complex and interesting! Well, you bet they are!" retorted Starr ruefully. "And she's up there in her room holding *me* responsible!"

"But how cleverly she carried off her

own part, Baldy! She is an original, isn't she? Well, old man, when you two are hitched, she'll at least keep you lively. No more dull days for you. I wish you joy."

"I suppose you're mad with jealousy," said Starr gloomily. "But you needn't be. Any girl would take you before me. Go ahead, if you want to, now you know who she is, and try out your luck. But I'll be sorry for her. If she married *me*," he said sentimentally, "I'd at least always be kind to her."

"She'll take care that you are. Let her alone for that. You're lucky, Baldy. She has money enough to enable you to support her in luxury. For a few years, at least, until the capitalistic system is broken and socialism established. I merely mention that to warn you that your bed of ease isn't going to be a lifetime nest—not if you live out your threescore and ten."

"Your old socialism can't come too soon for me. I hate her damned money! I've got plenty of my own to support a wife in ordinary comfort."

"Of course you have. And I know you *mean* you hate it," returned Oliver, with sudden earnestness. "And I love you for it, Baldy." He clasped his friend's hand. "You *are* to be congratulated, for she loves it as little as you do—and she's a damned fine woman. You *know* she's going to accept you."

"I would know it if you weren't in the field, Ed. But she's crazy about you—that is, not about you, the teacher, but you, the novelist. She told me she'd accept me if I could get Edward O. Potter for best man. And just then in you walked!"

Oliver chuckled. "If it weren't all too incredibly absurd, it would make a darned good story, Baldy. Tell me—does your engagement alter your Paris plan?"

"Not at all. She's going with me,

and will study French literature at the Sorbonne."

"Going with you! And you're not engaged?" Again Oliver chuckled. "Cheer up! I promise I won't accept her if she asks me."

"It's awful to go away and leave you two together out here, now that she knows you're the author of all those damned clever novels."

"But she thinks the illustrations are half their charm," said Oliver consolingly.

Starr, drawing a deep breath, rose heavily. "Good-by, Ed."

"I didn't say I was leaving you, Baldy."

"But I want a little time alone with her before I go."

"To propose again?"

"Yes; it's got to be an unconquerable habit."

"A *bad* habit. Show indifference. Bully her. You'll see a change of front at once. She's the sort you'll *need* to keep down a bit—or she'll lead you a pace."

Starr looked at him straight. "Is that the way you keep Mattie Miller in love with you?"

Oliver found himself, to his own surprise and annoyance, flushing riotously.

"I don't think I ever heard myself bullying Mattie, except once when she was deliberately starving herself. I made her quit it."

"For God's sake, *marry* her!" exclaimed Starr. "And leave Beatrice to me. What if she is a blacksmith's daughter? Look at Maud Muller. Wasn't the judge sorry all the rest of his life? And old Ford began his career as a ragman, if the muckrakers tell the truth. A blacksmith's better than a ragman."

"But Ford isn't Beatrice's father."

"He's probably a better man than the murderous English army officer who *was* her father—or the degenerate noblemen on her mother's side."



*She raised her sad eyes to his, the color dyeing her face at his strong touch upon her.*

"You argue well, Baldy. Miss Ford's evidently not good enough for me."

"Aha!" Starr suddenly exclaimed. "By Jove, Ed, I'll take your advice—I'll make Beatrice jealous."

"That's your weapon." Oliver nodded. "Not this hourly proposing. Ridiculous word, by the way, isn't it? Yes, make her jealous, Baldy."

"I will—by making love to your pretty little Mattie."

"No, you don't!" Oliver found himself retorting violently. "You don't disturb that child's peace and happiness! You'll not use *her* for your schemes. Not if I know it."

"*You've* played with her. You've got her peace and happiness in *your* hands, all right."

Oliver felt his heart in his throat. "I wouldn't hurt a hair of her head—nor let any other man."

Starr considered him thoughtfully. "I guess *you're* safe, Ed. I just wanted to try you and see. But I'm not so sure of Beatrice. Now," he repeated firmly, "good-bye. That damned stage will be here in an hour."

Beatrice evidently saw from her room Oliver's departure from the hotel, for she came down to the parlor at once.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

Beatrice's attitude toward the situation was indicated in her parting talk with Mr. Starr on that Sunday evening. Her wrath against him

was greatly modified when she learned that Mr. Potter had not, all this time, known who *she* was.

"But understand, Archibald," she concluded her forgiveness, "we're not engaged. Don't labor under any mistake."

"How much oftener have I *got* to propose, dearest? There was Thackeray—another celebrity; you think so much of celebrities, especially novelists

—who said he wouldn't be *caught* proposing twice to the same girl."

"Strange, isn't it, how celebrities can differ?" said Beatrice sweetly.

"How you've managed all these weeks, Beatrice, to keep from falling in love with Ed Potter——"

"If I had known he was Edward Potter, nothing could have stopped me."

"And now?" demanded Starr jealously.

"You and he both told me he meant to marry money. I mean to put him to the test."

"But I'm afraid if he yields to the temptation to propose, you will *accept* him."

"I'm not sure I shan't. I think he has all this time, perhaps, been cherishing a secret passion for me, and has concealed it only because of my apparent poverty."

"He's in love with that Mattie. If he proposes to you, it'll be for your money. If he couldn't ask you to marry him when he thought you were a poor teacher——"

"But I, thinking *him* only a poor teacher, held him at arm's length."

"You can't make *me* believe you are heartless and worldly."

"I'll prove it to you, Archie."

And with this flippant, tormenting promise, Starr had been obliged to leave her.

"I, too," Beatrice affirmed to herself, "can act a part. Mr. Edward Potter has made a fool of me, amused himself at my expense, drawn me on to flatter him to his face. I'll make him pay for it. He'll propose to me—since he's after a fortune—and I'll turn him down so thoroughly he'll wish he'd never seen this Adamstown High School!"

The following week at school proved to be an exciting one to both the principal and his assistant. The air between them was electric. Their intense consciousness of each other would certainly have communicated itself to their

pupils had these boys and girls been of any other race than that of the impenetrable Pennsylvania German.

Beatrice worked hard to give Mr. Potter every possible opportunity for "trying out" his ambition to marry for money. She treated him with a deference due his genius and his great reputation; she let him catch her gazing at him with awe and admiration; she "hung round" after school for him to walk with her to the Swan.

But he was very slow to bite.

Finally she grew daring.

"You know," she gently told him one afternoon on their homeward walk, "I'm *not* engaged to your illustrator."

"But I've promised to be best man at the wedding. I can't break my sacred promise. You'll *have* to marry him."

"Don't you think, Mr. Potter, that you and I have been two very extraordinary idiots not to have recognized each other as fakers?"

"I certainly did suppose I looked more like a great man than *you* seemed to find me."

"And I didn't measure up to your idea, did I, of 'the daughter of a hundred earls'?"

"Rather more than you measured up to my idea of a village teacher," he gallantly returned.

"You remember," she said gravely, "you once told me that 'Potter' meant to marry for money?"

"Alas, I know I did," he mourned. "That's why, no matter how much I may be secretly adoring you, I don't dare to propose to you—having given myself away so shamelessly."

"A little thing like that would not deter you if you——"

"If I loved you as you deserve to be loved? No"—he ruefully shook his head—"you would never be sure my motive was not sordid."

"I shouldn't dream of ever attributing

sordidness to you, Mr. Potter, after having read your books."

"The trouble is," he returned gravely, keeping it up, "you have too much money. I shouldn't need nearly so much."

"I wonder," she said thoughtfully, looking up at him as he walked at her side, his hands thrust into his coat pockets, his head bent forward, "if I had not always held you at arm's length, thinking you were a nobody, whether we *would* have fallen in love with each other."

"Is this," he inquired, returning her soft, upward gaze with cool speculation in his eye, "the way you talk to my friend, Mr. Starr, when you are out buggy riding with him?"

"No, *he* does the love-making."

"A woman that would marry me for my fame alone!" said Oliver dubiously.

"Kind hearts are more than coronets,  
And simple faith than Norman blood,"

he chanted.

Mocking his singsong tone, she repeated:

"Howe'er it be, it seems to me,  
'Tis only noble to be good.

Slush! Isn't Tennyson a dose sometimes?"

"That great minds can sometimes be extraordinarily simple—well, you have only to read certain pages of my novels——"

"I dare say. Of course, you will write up all this comedy of errors in your next?"

"Being a true episode, I should be accused of melodrama and impossible exaggeration."

"How shall you make it end?" she asked sweetly. "And who will be your heroine?"

"That depends upon whom I make the hero. If Baldy——"

"A pretty-looking hero!"

"Oh, but won't you have to apolo-

gize to me one of these days for the things you've said about your husband!"

"I am not engaged to Mr. Starr, Mr. Potter."

"You'd better not keep him dangling too long. I know his disposition—he's easily discouraged."

"I've found it quite impossible to discourage him."

It was with this exchange of amenities that they parted at the door of the Swan.

A few days later Beatrice wrote a long, frank letter to Starr, telling him how she had failed thus far in her strenuous effort to "pay back Mr. Potter" for the deception he had played upon her.

"What I cannot forgive is the way he led me on to discuss himself and his works to himself! I did make such a silly ass of myself!

"I am taking, now, a new tack—I am trying to counteract the effect of the unstinted flattery I so often gave him quite unconsciously. Yesterday I brutally told him that before he could do anything really great he needed to deepen; that expression came to him far too easily; that while he wrote brilliantly, he wrote lightly. He said he had long since evolved beyond the puerility and crudity of writing 'deep' books. How he does delight in those illuminating, paradoxical phrases of his—the dear!

"But just wait—I'll catch up with him yet. I'm bound to pay him out!"

It was after one of these after-school tilts between Beatrice and Oliver that the latter, going to pay his daily call at Uncle Jo's cottage, was met by the startling news that the sick man had that afternoon had a "sinking spell." The doctor was with him now, and Mattie, white and sorrowful, in the adjoining kitchen, was waiting for the end.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

In the crisis, Mattie had summoned her father from the near-by blacksmith



shop and he had fetched the doctor—so she informed Oliver.

Her father had stopped to speak with her for a few minutes. It was the first time they had met since she had left his house. He had taken advantage of the opportunity to give her to understand that after the way she had been "sponging" on Emmy's brother, getting out of him what "he had the right to give Emmy," she need not look to her father and his wife to open their home to her after Jo was gone.

"He says this to you, Mattie," Oliver offered a bit of palliation, "only at the instigation of his wife. I really don't believe he wants to treat you like that."

"Oh, but he feels it as much as Emmy does—that *they* might have had all this money it has cost Uncle Jo and me to get along all this time. But, Mr. Oliver," she sadly added, tears filling her eyes and dropping from her lashes, "I'm not worried about how I'm going to get along. I'm not thinking about myself at all, except how I'm going to miss him. He was so fond of me—and it makes such a difference in a person's life to have some one love you, and to have them be so grateful to you for what you try to do for them! I'll be lonesome, Mr. Oliver."

Oliver put his two hands on her shoulders as she stood before him.

She raised her sad eyes to his, the color dyeing her face at his strong touch upon her.

"This may be an all-night vigil for you and me, Mattie. Let me talk out some things with you that are pretty close to my heart. Or do you feel you would rather be alone?"

"Would you stay with me, Mr. Oliver? I did dread being alone. I have no one but you—except Miss Jenkins—and I feel so much nearer to you."

"Do you, Mattie?"

"Oh, yes."

"Is there any one else in the world, Mattie, as near to you as I am?"

"No." She slowly shook her head as she looked at him.

"Not even Johnny?"

"That is so different."

"May I talk to you to-night—or would you rather be quiet, dear?"

"I'd rather you'd talk to me."

He turned from her and paced the length of the room, his head bent in thought. He did not understand himself. He did not know *why* he found this village maiden—so wholly unsophisticated, only half educated, with nothing at all to commend her except her exquisite womanliness—why he found in her what he had never before found in any woman—a deep satisfaction, an instinctive oneness with himself, a sense of peace, of ease, of home. Perhaps it was because of her very difference from the women who had pursued him.

"To my world-parched taste, she is as refreshing as a spring of cool water. I *want* her! She is the only woman I ever really did want."

He turned to her abruptly and drew her to his side on a wooden settee that stood near the kitchen stove.

"Have you ever had the shadow of a suspicion, Mattie, that I am not just what I seemed to be?"

Mattie regarded him earnestly. "Why, no, sir, not just that. I have known you were not just like other teachers we had here, not like any one I ever saw; and I always knew you must come from very high people, your ways are so different—so gentle and so kind—though you are such a strong, manly man."

"Kind and gentle, Mattie? I have a perfectly devilish temper, my dear."

"Have you, Mr. Oliver?"

"But, Mattie, do you know, I simply can't imagine anything in the world tempting me to vent my temper on *you*, my little friend."

"In all the time that I've known you,

I've never seen you in a temper. A bad temper doesn't seem to me the worst fault a man can have, if it only comes in *spells*."

"Mine's that kind—it comes in spells—or in squalls, I might say. Cyclones, hurricanes. But to come to the point, Mattie, I am—well, I'm not a professional teacher at all. I came down here to get a background for fiction. My surname is not Oliver; it's Potter."

Mattie looked dazed. "Your name is not *Oliver*?"

"It's *Potter*, Mattie."

"Potter?"

"But you're not to tell a living soul. This is a secret between you and me."

She turned on the settee and gazed at him in consternation. "Are you—are you Edward O. Potter, the author of the novels?"

"Edward Oliver Potter." He nodded. "Don't look frightened, my dear. You'll find the novelist as harmless as the schoolmaster."

"But if you are he—the novel writer—then you are married and have children—and you have deserted them."

"What?"

"You told me one night—don't you remember?—that Potter was married and that he was awful to his wife and children when he was 'in the throes of writing.'"

"I was bluffing you, Mattie. I wanted to get at your idea of such an individual as a husband—the kind of husband I'm afraid I'd be."

"You're *not* married, then?"

"I'm as single as you are."

She breathed deep with relief.

"It *frightened* you, did it—the idea of my being married?"

"To think you'd desert your family. I didn't want to think you were that kind of a man."

"Your sympathy for my poor deserted family, Mattie! You turned quite white at the thought of their suffering, my dear."

"But why *did* you 'bluff' me? I mean why did you want to find out my idea about—what you said?"

"Your idea of the sort of husband I'd make? Because, Mattie," he said, very deliberately, his eyes on her face, "that has come to be a very vital question for me."

Mattie did not answer, but he saw how her bosom heaved and fell.

"Mattie, dear," he said gravely, "I have realized for some time that the day was surely coming when I should want to know, more than I wanted anything in this world, whether you would tolerate such a man for a husband."

"How do I know," she asked quickly, her face crimson, "that you aren't *now* 'bluffing' me in calling yourself 'Edward Potter'?"

"On my word of honor, Mattie. Also, I can prove it by Miss Jenkins."

"But *she* hasn't known it all this time, has she?"

"She learned it only last Sunday night."

"Oh," said Mattie breathlessly, "Miss Jenkins thought Potter so wonderful, but she didn't think you wonderful, Mr. Oliver."

"There's the difference between you and her. *You* knew I was wonderful, didn't you, Mattie, even when you didn't know I was a famous novelist?"

"Oh, I thought *more* of you before. I didn't like very well what you told me of Edward O. Potter. I've thought about it so often and I've lain awake at night feeling so sorry for his wife."

"I trust, my dear, you'll never again have to be sorry for his wife."

"But I can't realize what you tell me—that you are Edward Potter. Why," she softly exclaimed, "then you are a *great* man!"

"And you once told me, Mattie, you'd take me for a floorwalker! But I've not laid it up against you, dear."

"Must I now call you 'Mr. Potter'?"

"By no means. Seeing we're engaged



"Well, to think!" Uncle Jo murmured. "I'm glad to know, before I go, that my girl is gettin' the right man—fur you are the right one, professor; that I seen this good while back, a'ready!"

to be married, you'll have to call me 'Ed'."

"I couldn't."

"Why not?"

"I couldn't feel so familiar with you."

"All those who love me call me 'Ed,' Mattie—my sister, my mother, my intimate friends."

She was silent.

"You see, I'm hedging off the vital question, because I'm afraid to put it.

I'm afraid of the answer I'll get. These many days I've put off asking you, Mattie, whether you loved me, because I knew if you told me you did not—and could not—I hadn't the courage to face it."

"Oh," she cried, "why should you choose *me*—you, a great and distinguished man—out of all the many wonderful women you must know? There's Miss Jenkins; she's so above me——"

"I don't 'choose' you, dear. A man doesn't 'choose' a wife—he discovers her. Mattie, my home is with *you*, and if you can't marry me, I shall never have a home."

"Mr. Oliver—Mr. Potter——"

"Ed!"

"Why should a man like you have any doubt whether a girl like me could love you and marry you?"

"A girl like you—that's just the point. I shouldn't have the least doubt about a girl that *wasn't* like you. But you! You certainly have kept me guessing, Mattie Miller! Never a clew have you given me—never one encouraging sign—until this evening."

"But," she wondered, "what did I say this evening?"

"Nothing. You didn't say anything. But if you'd seen yourself, dear, when you thought, for a minute, that I was the husband and father of a deserted family!"

"I was so sorry for them," she faltered, her face burning.

"I know you've a sympathetic nature, dear, but don't tell me you'd expend so *much* feeling as I saw in your dear eyes on a deserted family you'd never seen. What puzzles me is how you've managed—if you did care for me—to keep me so in the dark. And *why?* Why did you think it necessary?"

"I was ashamed," she said, in a low voice, "to let you see how I liked you—how I trembled at your footstep in the house, and how I had to hold myself stiff and cold for fear you would see how my breath came short when you spoke to me. Oh"—she lifted shining eyes to his—"I didn't want you to see it, for I didn't suppose you'd think of wanting to marry me. And—and my arm!"

"It can be perfectly cured, and shall be. I have ascertained that. And Mattie," he admonished her, "don't you take that humble tone with me. In the things

that matter—the things of the soul—you are too far above me. What's more, when you come into your own—when you get out into life a bit and learn by contrast with others what you are in yourself, what your power is, little girl, you won't *feel* humble. You're an unusual woman, Mattie—in mind and character and instincts."

"I think I must be," she said wonderingly, "if you love me so. And I'll try not to feel humble to you," she gravely promised, "for I have seen how it spoils a man to have his wife feel humble before him."

He caught her to him. "But I shall always feel humble before *you*, you dear innocent!"

It was only a few moments later when the doctor, coming from the sick room, told them that Uncle Jo, for the present free from pain, awake, and conscious, could now see them and speak with them.

"He will not live through the night, so if you have any last thing to say, you can't put it off," was the physician's final word.

So together they went into Jo's room, and, kneeling at his bedside, made the last hour of his life almost the happiest he had ever known.

There was, however, just one phase of the information that Oliver gave him that seemed for a moment to cast a shadow upon his satisfaction.

"Then you *ain't* no poor man workin' fur no seventy-five dollars per?"

"No, Uncle Jo. A single magazine installment of one of my novels pays me almost as much as my whole year's salary here. So, you see, I'll be able to keep your little girl from starving, anyway."

"Well, to think!" Uncle Jo murmured. "Well, well! And here I was a-thinkin' you was a poor cove that would be *glad* fur a little token of remembrance from me, teacher—my Mexican pipe or what. And all this

time you're a rich man. Ach, well, you're a damned good fellah, if you *are* rich, and I'm glad," he said weakly, lifting his hand to lay it on Mattie's head, "to know, before I go, that my girl is gettin' the right man—fur you *are* the right one, professor; that I seen this good while back a'ready."

It was on the following evening that Beatrice again wrote a long letter to Archibald Starr.

"Things have been happening here in quiet Adamstown! 'Uncle Jo' died last night, and when I went, this morning, before school, to see Mattie, she confided to me that she was betrothed to Edward Potter. Can you see it? That unsophisticated child, who has never known anything outside the life of this village, engaged to our distinguished Mr. Potter! But really she is a very uncommon girl—there's something truly fine about her—and that's what Mr. Potter has had the sensitiveness to feel and recognize and love. He'll never regret it, either, for I'm sure that in the right atmosphere Mattie is capable of developing into a most interesting and charming woman.

"Better not come to Adamstown on Friday, Archibald. We're all too stirred up. I'll meet you in Philadelphia. And don't forget, when you answer this, to propose—for, having been refused by Mr. Potter, you may be able to persuade me to accept you. Write soon, for as soon as I *have* accepted you, I must let mother know. Of course, there will be a great row. She has other ambitions for me. She wants to marry me—as you may have heard—to an impecunious noble cousin. Fortunately my stepfather is not at all eager for the honor of paying the debts of our ancestral estate.

"I may as well tell you that I am allowed by Mr. Ford an income of ten thousand dollars a year, and mother has tried to stop it in order to force me to

come home and do as she wishes. But Mr. Ford, knowing how much more expensive that would be for him, insists upon paying me the income.

"It seems that 'Uncle Jo' left a little something to Mattie. A will that he made is to be read after the funeral to-morrow afternoon. I hope what he left will be enough to buy her a nice trousseau. And I'm so glad he didn't leave it to his snaky, horrible sister."

#### CHAPTER XXIX.

Beatrice, anticipating the renewal of Mr. Starr's proposal, had written to her mother, announcing—apologetically, though proudly—her betrothal to the well-known artist, Archibald Starr; for, however much her mother might scorn such an alliance, Beatrice was, in her heart, immensely complimented and exalted in her own esteem by the love of a man of genius.

"Be consoled, dear mother," she wrote in conclusion, after proclaiming the fatal fact, "I might have fallen in love with the village high-school principal here. He's a very good-looking, polite, and worthy young man, and you know I'm not stuck up."

But her mother found no consolation in being spared this suggested greater mortification. In immediate response to her daughter's letter, she telegraphed that she would come at once to Adamstown.

"Fancy mother in Adamstown!" Beatrice wrote to Archibald Starr. "At the Swan! When she sees my environment, I know she'll feel justified in having me taken in charge and locked up as a dangerous lunatic."

On the very next afternoon, while the funeral of Uncle Jo, followed by the reading of his will, was taking place, Mrs. Ford and her daughter, shut up in the girl's bedchamber at the Swan, waged their last, long, hard battle; for the one thing of which Mrs. Ford could



not bring herself to a realization was that she was proving incapable of managing her own daughter.

"Although you are your stepfather's heir, Beatrice, he will not, while he lives, allow you a dollar more than ten thousand a year. So if I permitted you to commit the madness of marrying this penniless painter, you would, during your stepfather's lifetime, have to live like a beggar. And I assure you, Beatrice, Mr. Ford is in excellent health."

"I trust he may continue to be, mother. I'm very fond of your husband. As for living like a beggar, Archibald's tastes are so simple that if he can earn enough to pay for my slippers, hose, and gloves, I can, on ten thousand a year, support him in what he will consider solid comfort. He says he would think *one* thousand a year that was an absolute certainty was solid comfort. You see, in his world—the artistic world—incomes are never certain."

"Are you trying to be impertinent?" demanded her mother.

"Not even humorous, mother. I'm being painfully literal."

"You would find, when you were married, that ten thousand would not go anywhere! And don't deceive yourself—don't count on Stanley's ever giving you a cent *more* than that."

"He already gives me a great deal more than I am worth. I shouldn't feel justified in accepting so much from him—ten thousand dollars a year that I have done nothing to earn—if I didn't intend using it to fit myself for usefulness in life; to *make* myself worth it."

"Stanley Ford's adopted daughter talking about 'earning' money!" exclaimed her mother. "It's disgusting! Why should you be so greedy, so lacking in public spirit, as to wish to rob some poor woman who is obliged to earn her living of the place you hold?"

"Mother, you married for money.

How about it? Has it made you happy?"

"Happy!" sneered Mrs. Ford. "I was thirty-seven years old when I married Stanley Ford. A woman of that age has learned the folly of looking for *happiness* in life! I've had what I aimed to have—a brilliant career. I'm a success. So I am content. Or I would be if you didn't devil me to death with your headstrong folly, your impertinence and disobedience."

Beatrice looked at her mother thoughtfully. "How about my own father? You married him for love, didn't you, mother?"

"Of course I did, being a mere girl at the time, and not knowing any better. We were perfectly mad about each other. But, Beatrice, at the end of a year you couldn't have *galvanized* either of us into a spark of feeling for each other. So much for your youthful 'love.' A marriage of expediency is the only sort that common sense can tolerate."

"I can't believe it, mother, dear," said Beatrice earnestly. "I'm sure that if one builds one's life on sound foundations, there *are* sources of happiness, of blessedness, that will endure."

"Don't theorize. I've no patience with it. If your stepfather didn't back you up in your madness, I should soon have you in your proper place."

"Under your thumb? No, siree, mother! Even if Mr. Ford did connive with you and cut me off without a dollar, I should insist on my liberty, my right to live my own life."

"I don't know where your *pride* is!" her mother complained bitterly.

"I'm prouder than I have words to say—that I am loved by a man of genius who is at the same time a clean, strong, fine, true——"

"Oh, *spare* me!"

"But, mother," Beatrice asked curiously, "where was your pride when you

married a man like my dear stepfather?  
An ex-ragman!"

"I'm not snobbish, Beatrice. I wanted money, with all the freedom and power that it gives."

"Snobbish?" Beatrice repeated. "I'm afraid I *am*, a little. I suppose it's my English blood that makes me have to really fight an innate snobbishness. It is rather a handicap to one's free development on a large scale."

"In Heaven's name, how you do talk, Beatrice! *What* is a 'handicap'?"

"To be born of English blood, I mean."

"I can't see that it deters *you* from 'a free development on a large scale.'" her mother retorted, with scathing irony.

They talked until both were exhausted, and it all ended as argument usually does end—leaving the disputants farther apart at the end than at the beginning.

That night Beatrice wrote to Archibald Starr: "You know how ambitious I am to get something really worth while out of my life, to make something of myself, though I am a woman. But, Archibald, my first and greatest ambition is to make ours a real home. My mother's household never was a home. I am sure there is nothing the world could give me that I should value above a happy family life—with an atmosphere of love and comradeship. I want children. I want our home to stand for something, Archibald. You see, my tastes and ambitions are, after all, very normal and simple. I believe there never was a woman—I might almost say a human being—who was not lonely until she—or he—had found a relation like yours and mine."

And Archibald Starr, when he had read that letter, felt an impulse to get down on his knees and thank "whatever gods there be" for the great gift they had vouchsafed to him—the greatest of all life's gifts—a true mate.

## CHAPTER XXX.

The entire village of Adamstown always turned out to attend any funeral that took place within a radius of several miles. So of course that of Uncle Jo was largely attended.

Oliver, as a pallbearer, was there perforce. Mr. and Mrs. Miller were present as mourners—a concession to public opinion, for Mrs. Miller's heart was as full of bitter resentment toward her dead brother as of malice against her stepdaughter. Oliver had told her of his betrothal to Mattie, and the prospect of having the girl live on here in the town and—in her exalted position as wife of the high-school principal—triumph over her, a mere blacksmith's wife—Well, she would have John say everything possible against Mr. Oliver to the school directors to make them "chase him off his job."

Her only consolation in the situation was the stylish mourning John had let her buy for the funeral.

The Evangelical preacher officiated, and even Jo's warmest friends would not have recognized him in the wonderful word portrait the speaker drew of a meek and holy saint, absolutely devoid of common human frailties and so unspotted from the world that heaven and not earth was his true home. "And," concluded the preacher oratorically, "let me assure you, my brothers and sisters who still are imprisoned in the carnal flesh, that the heavenly life, compared to this life here of which I referred to, is not comparable at all! And so I warn you in the words of our funeral hymn:

"Let this wain world engage no more!  
Behold the gaping tomb!  
It bids us seize the present hour.  
To-morrow death may come!

"The voice of this alarming scene  
May every heart obey!  
Nor be the heavenly warning vain  
Which calls to watch and pray."



*As for Mrs. Miller, she swooned. Her husband, stricken with a realization  
lawyer and Oliver lifted his wife*



of what he and his wife had missed, sat by in stolid indifference while she  
and laid her on the settee.

When the ordeal—a pretty stiff one for Oliver—was over, and they had returned to the empty house, Mr. and Mrs. Miller flatly refused to remain to hear the reading of the will.

"What fur shall we set and listen to how John's daughter—he has ashamed to call sich a brazen hussy his daughter!—has worked my poor deceased brother to leave her what had ought to have come to *me*, anyhow?" Mrs. Miller argued with the Lancaster attorney, who informed her that she must be present.

"I don't know whom you mean by the 'brazen hussy,'" the lawyer retorted, "for your brother was certainly not 'worked' by anybody in the disposition of his money. No one but *me* knows a thing about his will, or what he *had* to dispose of. It's all been a mighty well-kept secret, Mrs. Miller."

"Well, I know he left it, whatever it is, away from *me*—and I'm pretty sure he did leave it to the girl that lived there alone with him in that house—and him a single gentleman yet—"

"You are named in the will, and so is your son, and you must be present."

A spark of avaricious hope came into the woman's eyes as she heard this. Without further protest, she followed the lawyer into the poor little cottage.

"I wonder at Jo," she whispered to her husband, "if he did have money laid by, that he lived in such a tumble-down place like this here, and hardly any furniture in it, neither!"

"Mattie, she does have it nice and clean, ain't?" her husband returned. a bit ruefully, as he sat down in the shining kitchen, the only room in the house beside the two bedrooms. Mr. Miller was feeling the difference between his wife's housekeeping and that of his daughter. Emmy was a bit fond of her ease.

"Well," she replied, "you always complained how our first wife was so much fur chasin' the dirt that you

hadn't no peace, so I don't see what fur you're praisin' up Mattie, now, fur scrubbin' up."

Her husband offered no reply. He had long since learned where discretion lay in dealing with Emmy.

Mr. Oliver, too, had been told by the lawyer that he must be present at the reading of the will.

"I hope," was Oliver's inward prayer, "that Jo hasn't willed me his darned old pipe that he thought so much of, as a token of his esteem for me."

When they were all assembled—Mr. and Mrs. Miller, Johnny, Mattie, and Oliver—every chair in the cottage having been brought into the kitchen, the lawyer, seated in the center of the room, opened the will.

Its items were a succession of thunderbolt shocks, of brickbats hurled at their heads.

The Mexican ranch land that Joseph Yoder had owned had been sold and the proceeds invested in government bonds. The estate amounted to one hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

It had been the intention of the testator, the will affirmed, to leave this fortune in its entirety to his sister and her son, his only living relatives; but her cruel treatment of him in evicting him in a dying condition from her home, and the self-sacrificing care and devotion of his adopted daughter, Mattie, had led him to alter his purpose.

First, a legacy of five thousand dollars was left to Mr. Oliver in acknowledgment of his helpful, generous kindness to one who, he had believed, could make him no material return.

Second, the entire remainder of the estate was left to his adopted daughter, Mattie.

Mr. Oliver and Mattie were named as executors.

If, for any reason, Mr. Oliver should fail to claim this legacy, it reverted to Mattie.

A codicil provided that Mattie would



forfeit her inheritance if she gave to or spent upon the dead man's sister, Emmy Miller, or her husband, John Miller, one dollar of her fortune, but she was free to provide for and educate, in any way she saw fit, her half brother, Johnny.

To each and every individual present the shock produced by this utterly unexpected document was one of gloom rather than joy. To Oliver it meant, for reasons of his own, an immediate readjustment of his relation with Mattie—a readjustment against which his heart rebelled. To Mattie it was simply ungraspable. As for Mrs. Miller, she swooned. Her husband, stricken with the realization of what he and his wife had missed, sat by in stolid indifference while the lawyer and Oliver lifted his wife and laid her on the settee. Johnny alone, audibly munching an apple during the reading of the will, remained unimpressed.

It was when Oliver was taking Mattie, that evening, to stay with Beatrice at the Swan until some plan for her could be decided upon, that he broke it to her how he felt about her inheritance.

"I'm the only man you have ever really known. You've got to get out into the world—now that such wonderful opportunities are yours—and see life, and men and women, before you commit yourself to me, Mattie. I'm not going to take advantage of your inexperience. Maybe, when you've traveled and met a lot of people and learned the many things you *will* learn, you may find that I am not, after all, the man you want to marry."

"But if I thought Uncle Jo's money would lead me to change like that," she pleaded, "I wouldn't touch it. Why, I wouldn't be myself if I didn't—care for you."

The word "love," he had noticed, used by the Pennsylvania Germans

rarely, and then generally in a religious sense, was hard for Mattie to utter.

"Edward," she urged, with a restrained intensity in her voice and eyes, "while I breathe and think, I could never, never change toward you."

"Dear, I know you feel like that *now*. But, Mattie, I must be sure that you and I, out of all the world, would find each other. I have known about every variety of woman on the globe, and I have found that you only are my mate. You, too, must have your wider range before you settle on *me*. Do you know what I am going to do with you? First, you are going to have your arm cured. Then I am going to send you over to Paris to stay with Archibald Starr and his bride. You shall see and know men and women of the world, as your friend, Beatrice, will understand how to have you know them. Then, after a time, if you bid me, if you still want me, I'll come to you."

Mattie did not answer at once as she walked at his side. But presently, in a low voice that trembled a little, she asked: "You really want to send me away from you?"

"For a time, dear."

"So far away? To Europe?"

"So far that I can't get at you—that I'll *have* to let you alone—until you are sure of yourself."

"But if you think I might change toward you, Edward, why do you want to risk it?"

"To be fair to you, dear. And to be, in the end, *sure* of you."

"I would get too homesick."

"For Adamstown?"

"I would get homesick for you."

"Beatrice and you are fond of each other."

"But, Edward," she pleaded, "you don't need to worry about that—about being sure of me—you can be perfectly sure of me. Edward, I don't want to go away."

There was a note of repressed terror

in her voice that thrilled him. But he steeled himself against it.

"Can't you trust me, dear, that it will, in the end, be for your good—for your greater happiness? I'm not going to let you give yourself to me blindly, child."

"Beatrice won't want to be bothered with me in her honeymoon," she desperately sought a way out.

"Even in her honeymoon there's nothing Beatrice would enjoy more, Mattie, than managing your case, putting you in the way of what she will see that I want you to get. No, it's *not* what I want you to get," he suddenly burst out. "God knows it is what I *don't* want you to get. I would keep you as you are—my little wild flower. I hate the thought of making you worldly-wise and sophisticated. But it's your right, dearest, to be given your chance. I'm *not* going to stand in your way."

Mattie did not answer. So long did she remain silent that Oliver, glancing down at the pale face above the black that she wore, was startled to see that tears were rolling down her cheeks.

"Dear!" he exclaimed, catching the hand that rested on his arm.

"I couldn't bear it!" she sobbed. "To go away from you! You are the only person I have in the world, now, that cares for me. I can't go away with strangers. I want to be with you—close to you."

For the very luxury of her clinging to him, he prolonged her torment. "But, darling, some day you may thank me for sending you from me."

"I don't believe you think that, Edward. You must know that I am not that kind of a person—that I could never, never change toward you. I can't, I *can't* go away from you!"

"Come!" He led her away from the main street into a lane that opened toward the wide country. "There!" He folded her to him when they were quite alone and out of sight. "It shall be as you wish, and as Heaven knows I wish.

Life is too short to spend any precious hours of it in unnecessary suffering. You and I would suffer too much if I let you go, wouldn't we? Wouldn't we?" he repeated, kissing her again and again.

The hour was late when at length they reached the Swan.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

In Beatrice's next letter to Mr. Starr, she wrote: "Mr. Potter certainly has a plot ready at his hand for his next. Hero thinks he wants to marry money, but when the chance comes his way, he heroically resists; engages himself to penniless ingénue whom he truly loves; only to find virtue rewarded by discovering that the penniless one is, after all, an heiress. Fetching plot, isn't it, and so original? But it's true, Archibald. Mattie's Uncle Jo left her over one hundred thousand dollars."

And Starr, in his reply, feeling that now, in his secure possession of Beatrice, he could afford to be generous to Potter, wrote: "Potter was always like that, always surprising himself, always discovering, when put to the test, that he didn't measure down to his own mean idea of himself, that an *ugly* thing he could not do."

So there was a double wedding just after Christmas, leaving two vacancies in the Adamstown High School and cheating the directors of the delicate pleasure—which, as a board clad in a little brief authority, they always enjoyed—of "firing" their high-school teachers and replacing them with two other timid candidates fearful of losing their places.

The strain of it all caused Mrs. John Miller to fall ill with what the doctor called—so her husband "put it out"—"nervous prostitution." During the two weeks that Oliver remained in her house—a woman of the village having charge of things—he grew almost to pity Mat-

tie's persecutor, so keenly did she suffer in the thought of the great fortune she had allowed to escape her.

The discovery that Mr. Oliver was a well-known novelist made no perceptible impression upon Adamstown. Those who did give the matter a moment's attention felt that novel writing was rather a frivolous pastime for a high-school principal, who ought surely to be of a serious mind.

Mrs. Miller, however, did look upon her boarder, in his newly discovered identity, with some wonder.

"I always thought," she told him one day from the couch on which she lay prone, helpless, and really ill, "that to see a person that wrote a *book* yet would be like seein' a king or queen. But," she added, in a tone of disparagement, "it ain't nothin'."

"It isn't much," he agreed with her, "but it's a great deal more than being a king or queen, Mrs. Miller, if the book is a *good* one."

"Do you like Marie Corelli's works?" she vaguely inquired, evidently feeling

that she must learn, while she had the chance, something of the tastes of a celebrity.

"No," was his unqualified reply.

"Well," she conceded, "I guess it is that way, still—that one writer don't like another."

He did not attempt to dispute her conclusion.

"Do you own your own royalties?" she asked.

"If I didn't," he grinned, wondering what she supposed "royalties" were, "I couldn't afford to marry Mattie."

After Mattie's marriage, in view of what she could do for Johnny, the boy was permitted to spend three months of every year at his sister's home in New York.

And even when a son and then a daughter of her own came to her, it in no wise moderated the motherly devotion she had always given to her little half brother, a devotion that Oliver learned to share with her as he shared all the other things of her life, to the enrichment of his own.

THE END.

### Welsh Courtesy

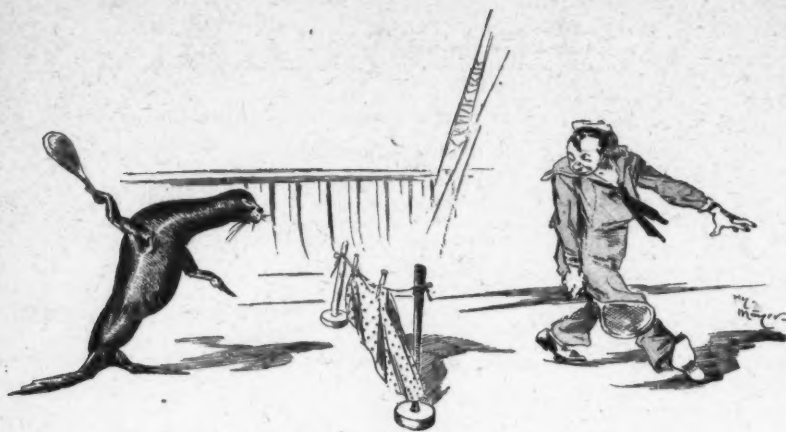
JAMES L. HAYS, for twelve years postmaster at Newark, New Jersey, and beloved the country over by letter carriers for fathering the regulation permitting them to go without coats in hot weather, was traveling in Wales, and went, one Sunday, to hear the preaching in the village chapel.

There was no hymn book in his pew, but when the rest of the congregation rose to sing, he stood up, too. Much to his astonishment the minister came down the pulpit steps and up the aisle, and placed in his hands the pulpit hymnal, opened at the proper page.

Mr. Hays was deeply impressed by this show of cordiality, and he mentioned his feeling to the village barber next day.

"I have visited many churches," said he, "but I have never seen such a thing happen anywhere else. A beautiful custom it is, for the minister to welcome the stranger. Is it done generally in Wales?"

"Don't be misled," laughed the barber. "The minister never done that to be civil to you. Na, na, he did it to shame his congregation and teach 'em better manners. They's a particular hard, mean flock that worships God in that chapel."



# Marmaduke, Prodigy

By Wallace Irwin

ILLUSTRATED BY H.V. MAYER

WHEN I was up with Freddy Cook,  
A sort of rough-and-ready cook,  
A-helpin' him discover of another Northern Pole,  
A baby seal named Marmaduke  
With manners that would charm a duke  
I captured on an iceberg, hidin' coily in a hole.

Now facts of actuality  
Proves seals has got mentality  
Much sharper than the Eskimos what eats 'em for their fat;  
And Marmaduke had knowledge that  
Could stump the smartest college that  
Makes specialty of calculus and knowledge sich as that.

I fust taught Marm to bounce a ball  
Upon his nose and jounce a ball  
Along the deck upon his flip, the reg'lar circus style;  
But in a week I found that he  
That ball so neat could bound that he  
Could beat me at lawn tennis by a quarter of a mile.

But this here puerile, mildish play  
He counted as a childish play;  
So next I got some lima beans and taught him how to count.  
He learnt with such agility—  
Re-mark-a-bile ability—  
That he could add and multiply to any old amount.

A book of calculus in text,  
Without the slightest fuss he next  
Took up, a-readin' evenin's when the crew was wastin' time;  
For hours he used to con, I know,  
The Euclid rule o' one, I know—  
And say! His concentration was no less than plumb sublime.

When off the coast of Jinkinjog,  
The capting took to drinkin' grog;  
Our ship she lost 'er bearin's and the ice pack set us in.  
Our mate, Horatio Narramore,  
Though handsome as a Barrymore,  
Was awful short on figures when it came to tacks and tin.

"We're lost!" Horatio shouted when  
The icy ocean spouted—when  
We heard a flippy-flippin' right across the quarter-deck;  
Without the slightest rumpus, sir,  
Came Marm—surveyed the compass, sir,  
Quartered the sextant, took the sun, and—by the Dipper's Neck!—

Before the Fates could smile at us  
That seal began to pilot us—  
Three flips upon the deck he flopped, which meant, "Nor'cast by west."  
Around them icy menaces  
We steered as smooth as Venice is  
When gondolierious dagos paddle round in Sunday best.

In two weeks' time our cap'n, he  
Recovered from his nappin' spree,  
And feelin' rather crabbedlike—perhaps you've felt the feel—  
He yells: "Who's got his hand in here,  
Assumin' my command in here?"  
We all looked downcast, doffed our caps, and pointed to the seal.

"I'll fix him!" cried the skipper cruel  
As from his belt a ripper cruel,  
A four-inch blade, he whipped across and for that seal he went.  
Our deck with gore was watered then,  
A sealskin coat was slaughtered then,  
And Marmaduke lay limp and dank, his budding genius spent.

"Alas!" I says quite scathin'ly  
Unto our bos'n, Nathan Lee,  
"Twas ever thus with genius since the world began its flight.  
The wicked gits the best of it,  
The dull acquire the rest of it,  
And death's the dose for folks like us—the virtuous and bright."





# The Healing of William Hanscom

By Louise Driscoll

Author of "The Ninth Commandment," "Old Lace," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY MAYO BUNKER

MRS. RENNERT thought she would stop to see her Cousin Delia Hanscom, as her errand took her near Delia's home. She turned into the neat little yard and went up the front steps. There was an exquisite order about the place, but the air seemed close and stuffy as Mrs. Rennert closed the door behind her. She had entered without ringing the doorbell. Mrs. Rennert never entered the Hanscom house without wishing she could leave the door open.

"Poor Delia!" she sighed, as she often did on these occasions.

She was about to go to the kitchen, where she thought she would probably find Delia, when she heard a fretful voice calling from a room that opened from the dining room as an L on the little house.

"De-lia!" came the voice, rising sharply, with a shade of fear and irritation. "Dee-lia! Come right here! I'm going to have a sinking spell! I think I'm dying, Delia!"

Mrs. Rennert's lips tightened, and her frame shook with an impatient tremor. She stood still, waiting for Delia's gentle answer, the soft, patient voice that was so familiar to her.

"If Delia wasn't so everlastingly meek," Mrs. Rennert sometimes said, "it would be better for her and for him, too."

But this time Delia wasn't meek. No one had ever heard Delia speak like this before. Her voice sounded angry.

"For Heaven's sake, William," she cried sharply, "shut up! You can't die now. I'm too busy to bother with you!"

Mrs. Rennert was silent for a very wonder, but, as she heard a faint moan follow Delia's cry, she ran into the kitchen and found Delia trying to shake some flour over a badly scalded hand. Mrs. Rennert opened the pantry door and seized a bottle of oil she knew was kept there.

"You poor thing!" she exclaimed. Delia was sobbing now.

"I couldn't think what it was I ought to have," said Delia. "It hurts so!"

She called Mrs. Rennert's attention to a large kettle on the back of the stove. "I upset the jam," she explained.

"I'll take care of that," said Mrs. Rennert soothingly. "You only spilled a little—all on yourself, too, poor dear! There!"

She tore an old napkin in strips and bound the injured hand skillfully. A loud groan came from the room in the L, and Delia started guiltily.

"I was awfully cross to William," she said regretfully. Mrs. Rennert pushed her gently back into her chair.

"You sit still!" she said. "I'll look after William."

She went into the room where William sat. He was really disturbed, for he had never met such treatment from Delia before.

"What's the matter?" he demanded, as soon as he saw Mrs. Rennert.

"Delia burned her hand," she told him. "Do you want anything?"

William's slight figure stiffened indignantly. He was a small man, and he looked old, for his shoulders were bent and his face pallid. He had not been out of that room for five years. A weakness of the heart having followed an attack of the grippe, William had refused to believe himself cured and had spent those years waiting for sudden death.

"Do I want anything?" He repeated her words bitterly. "Want anything! Oh, no!" He became very scornful. "No, of course not!" he exclaimed, snorting a little as his irritation deepened. "I'm only dying."

"I wouldn't if I was you," said Mrs. Rennert briefly. "You ain't ready for heaven yet, by any manner of means." She looked about the room. "You'd feel better if you was to open a window here," she added.

"That's right!" the invalid snapped in reply. "That's right! Give me pneumonia and hurry things up a little!"

"Well, you are kind of slow about dying," said Mrs. Rennert, lingering at the threshold and filled with unholy satisfaction at the opportunity of speaking her mind to William: "You've been at it five years, and I can't see as you're anywhere near it yet."

She turned and left him. She had longed to say something like this to William, but had always felt restrained by

Delia's uncomplaining patience and devotion. She went back to the kitchen and looked at her cousin thoughtfully.

"You're all tuckered out, Delia," she said, and Delia sobbed again. Delia's nerves were shaken by her accident. Mrs. Rennert put the jam in jars and cleaned the stove and the floor. She made Delia a cup of tea, and after a little while, when they heard William groan, they looked at one another and smiled a little. "He don't need any help as long as he can make as much noise as that," said Mrs. Rennert.

"I think he could get out if he wanted to," said Delia unexpectedly.



*She found Delia trying to shake some flour over a badly scalded hand.*

"Of course he could," said Mrs. Rennert. "It's just a kind of nervous notion he's got." She regarded her cousin with a thoughtful manner, and then made her proposal suddenly, telling at the same time the bit of news that had brought her in that morning. "Now, see here, Delia," she began, "you're just about tired out."

And then she told how she had rented her own house, furnished, to a friend of the minister's, a gentleman whose son had been very ill and who wished to bring his family to the country at once.

"Those people are coming this afternoon," said Mrs. Rennert, "and I came here this morning to ask if I could spend a couple of nights here, until I could get things straightened out for them. I kind of thought I'd go over to Milton to stay a while, but I don't know what I'd do all the time. I can come here just as well's not, and you can go away."

Delia's eyes grew suddenly very wide and startled, but her cousin did not give her time to protest.

"I'll go out and telephone to Helen." She mentioned Delia's sister, who lived on a comfortable farm a few miles back from Jones Corners. "Helen will be tickled to death to have you; and she can drive right in for you, and you can get a good rest. I'll be good to William—honest, I will."

Delia's tired face brightened for an instant. "My, I'd love it!" she breathed softly. Delia had reached a climax. The accident had precipitated the accumulated weariness of years upon her nerves. She became hysterical. "It's awful!" she sobbed. "It's awful, but I just feel as if I'd go down and jump in the creek if William don't stop calling to me!"

"Of course you do," Mrs. Rennert agreed with her soothingly. "It's providential, I believe. I was pretty well flustered when Mr. Wyndam came and they took the house so sudden, but the

gentleman offered me fifty dollars a month for six months, and I knew that wasn't to be sneezed at."

"I'm real glad for you," said Delia. She sat up and brushed back her hair from her forehead with her uninjured hand. "I'll go," she said suddenly. "I'll go just as soon as I can. Will you please telephone to Helen right away?"

"Yes," promised Mrs. Rennert, and she picked up the little bag she had dropped on a chair when she had seen Delia's hand. She had not taken off her hat. Delia was thinking rapidly.

"I think Helen will drop everything and come right in," she said. "She's wanted me to come for ever so long. I won't tell William till the last minute. That'll be the best way. I know it's awful, but I can't help it." She struggled with herself again. "It isn't that I don't think a lot of William," she insisted. "I keep thinking about the way he used to be before he was sick. It seems as if he'd be so sorry for me now." She followed her cousin to the door. "You can't think how aggravating it gets," she confessed, speaking freely now that the floodgates were let down. "It seems sometimes as if I never get my hands in anything that he don't have a dying spell."

Mrs. Rennert telephoned to Delia's sister, who embraced the plan eagerly and promised to start for Jones Corners at once. "It won't take me more than two hours," she said. "I'll get there by twelve o'clock."

If there had been any delay, it is possible Delia might have weakened, but she seemed driven now by weariness and pain, and she moved as if she were dreaming. William thought he was dreaming when she stood before him, ready for the drive.

"I'm going out to make Helen a little visit," she told him, as if it were quite an ordinary thing. "Cousin Mary will look after you."

Mrs. Rennert stood beside her and



*William opened his mouth, but did not seem to be able to make any sound.*

remarked briskly: "Yes, I'll look after you, William."

And William opened his mouth, but did not seem to be able to make any sound.

Delia turned from him and left the room, and a few incoherent protestations followed her.

"But, Delia——" He choked and tried to call her back. "You can't—Delia—— I can't—— Really, Delia, I might die, Delia!"

Delia turned at the threshold. "Oh, no," she said wearily. "I guess you won't die, William. You never do."

It did not seem to him that it was his wife who spoke. It was some strange, cruel woman who looked like Delia. It did not seem to Delia that it was herself who went out of the house, disregarding the voice that had held her chained so long. Delia was so tired that she could not think any more, and her hand was aching with a pain that seemed to numb every other feeling. Mrs. Rennert stood at the door and watched Helen take her away and then turned, leaving the door open. It was a bright day in early June, but the air was a little cool. William felt the fresh air and shivered.

"I'm getting cold!" he shouted. "Shut that door! Ah-h-h! Shut that door!"

Mrs. Rennert looked in at him.

"That air won't do you any harm, William. If you want the door shut, go out and shut it." She smiled pleasantly. "I think the air is good for you," she told him.

"I can't go," declared William. "You know I can't go. I haven't been out of this room for five years."

"That's not my fault, William," said Mrs. Rennert, and she went upstairs to unpack the little bag she had brought with her.

William was in the habit of dressing very slowly each morning and walking to a chair by a window, where he spent the day. At night he walked back across the room to bed. He had persuaded

himself that he could do no more than this. The fresh air came through the hall, across the dining room, and into the room where he sat. It was not really cold, but he thought it was.

"Lord! Lord!" he murmured anxiously. He found it hard to realize that Delia had gone off like this and left him to the mercies of her heartless cousin. "I'm freezing to death," he told himself. He thought he was getting colder and colder. "Then they'll feel bad," he reflected, with vindictive satisfaction at the picture. "I guess they'll feel bad when I get pneumonia and die and they know it's all their fault."

He tried to sneeze, but found it difficult. So he coughed quite loudly instead. He could hear Mrs. Rennert singing softly as she moved about the room upstairs. After a little while she came down. She did not seem to hear him cough. He rose with a feeling of desperation, and walked to the bed. He pulled off a quilt, which he wrapped about himself, and walked to his chair, where he sat feeling his pulse to see if the unusual exertion had affected his heart.

"It wouldn't make any difference to her if it did," he thought miserably. He sniffed a little as the odor of fresh biscuits came to him from the kitchen. "There she is," he said to himself, "making all sorts of good things I can't eat."

In the old days William had liked good food, but since his illness he had forbidden Delia to cook anything that had too alluring an odor. He smelled bacon. He had always liked bacon very much. He was feeling very reproachful when Mrs. Rennert brought in a tray for him. She brought him two poached eggs and a strip or two of bacon, nicely browned. There were some creamed potatoes on the tray and the fresh biscuit and a dish of strawberries and a cup of coffee. It was a long time since William had been



tempted with coffee. He looked at the tray sullenly, and attempted to push it away from him, but Mrs. Rennert restrained him.

"What's this?" he asked.

"It's your dinner, William," replied his wife's cousin, "and it's all you're going to get. If you don't like it, you can leave it."

"You ain't got anything I can eat," he shouted. He was rather excited, for the bacon and the coffee allured him.

"There isn't anything there that'll do you any harm," said Mrs. Rennert.

William thought of having a sinking spell, but restrained himself. "It'd be just like that woman to go and open all the windows if I did," he reflected.

After she had left the room, he realized that she had not seemed to observe the quilt and the obvious effort he had made to get it. He tasted the bacon gingerly, and then broke off a bit of crust from one of the biscuits. He ate rather slowly, because it was his intention to leave the tray looking as if it had hardly been touched; but slowly the eggs and bacon and potato and biscuit disappeared.

He thought he would leave the strawberries. "So's she'll see I can't eat everything," he thought; but the berries were tempting, and he cut off a little of one with his spoon and tasted it. It was not altogether easy to appear to be at the point of death with that empty tray before him, and he hated Mrs. Rennert when she came in to get it. She made no comment, however.

"I expect that coffee'll kill me," he ventured to remark as she was leaving him.

"Oh, I guess not, William," she replied, and he found that it did not.

Mrs. Rennert brought him very good meals. She paid no attention to his protests and demands for gruel. "I ain't going to hurt you, William," she assured him, and William found him-

self looking forward to the moment when his next tray was due. He grew stronger in spite of himself. She gave him broths and steaks and eggs. Once or twice it happened that William walked to the door of his room when he had something he really wanted to say and was perfectly sure she wouldn't come to hear it. She left the front door open most of the time. Once in a while she would go out and leave him alone for an hour or two.

A note came from Helen, saying that Delia had gone to bed and that the doctor had said she must stay there until she was rested. Helen could not say when Delia would be home. Mrs. Rennert read the note to William with a certain satisfaction. William did not say very much. Under the crust of selfishness that had grown over his soul during the past few years, something was stirring now. He missed Delia very much. It troubled him to know she was ill.

"She wouldn't have gone off and left me like that if she hadn't been sick," he thought, and he began to recall her uncomplaining, gentle services. "She never said she was tired," he told himself, and he tried to be a little cross because Delia had never said she was tired. "That woman out there would say it fast enough," he reflected, but he did not wholly dislike Mrs. Rennert. She had been tactful in her failure to comment upon his increasing appetite and the fact that he had twice walked out into the kitchen for a drink of water when she had been upstairs and had refused to come down and wait upon him.

He was daily more concerned about Delia, and when no further news had come for nearly a week, he urged Mrs. Rennert to go out and telephone to Helen asking about her. Mrs. Rennert went willingly, and left the front door open. June was cool that year, and, as is often the case, it seemed cooler in



*Another man was nearer and quicker and had reached the horse's head.*

the house than out of doors. William felt the draft coming down the hall and across the dining room, and shivered.

"If I could just get her to keep that door shut," he reflected, "it wouldn't be so bad." William's temper had certainly improved a little.

He went to the door of his room and looked out to see how bad the draft was. Some light papers fluttered to the floor as the wind swept over the table there. William came slowly across the room and into the hall. The door stood

wide open. Through it he could see the neat walk to the gate and the syringa bushes he had planted on either side of it. They were in full bloom, and the odor came to him pleasantly as he went down the hall.

"My, my! How they have grown!" he said aloud. He found himself very much pleased and interested in the way the syringa bushes had grown. When he reached the door, he found the air very pleasant and soft, warmer than it was in the house. William found he

liked to feel it on his face. It seemed a long time since he had walked out into a June morning and felt the soft air on his face and smelled syringa blossoms. There were some chairs on the porch. He sat in one of them.

"I suppose I might as well wait for her here," he told himself.

A neighbor, coming down the street, spied him.

"Well, hello, Will!" cried the neighbor heartily. "You're a sight for sore eyes!"

The neighbor came in and greeted him cordially. William glowed with a pleasing sense of importance. He had rather shrunk from having this man see him, but he watched with interest for the next one, who also expressed surprise and pleasure at seeing him look so well. The third passer-by William greeted as soon as he came within hailing distance. He enjoyed sitting on the porch, and he was grateful when Mrs. Rennert expressed no astonishment at finding him there, but treated it quite as a matter of course.

Helen had said that Delia was better, but still pretty weak. They were keeping her in bed, she said. The doctor called it a rest cure.

After that day, William walked to the piazza every morning, and sometimes stayed all day. The village folk who went by all called to him or stopped to speak with him, and a number of people came out of their way to call upon him. He enjoyed the sense of importance all this gave him, and was really feeling a good deal better. One day he walked down to the gate and back. He began to take pride in having people tell him how well he was looking.

But he missed Delia more all the time. It was not that he wanted Delia to wait on him. He found himself doing all sorts of little things for himself, and even got so far, at the end of a few weeks, as to offer to wipe the dishes for Mrs. Rennert so she could

come and sit on the porch with him. At his own suggestion, she stopped bringing him the tray, and he came in to the table and ate with her. He was easily tired, and the old fear came back once in a while, but Mrs. Rennert watched him closely.

"It certainly is funny," she said to herself one evening, when she had led him back to his room and left him there. "Six weeks ago I was all for getting him out, and here I am now trying to hold him back, so's he won't get too tired."

A letter came from Delia, saying that she was much better and anxious to come home, but William himself wrote her a few lines, begging her to stay. He was all right, he said, and she must rest and get perfectly well.

Delia was very much surprised by this letter. "It sounds just like William used to be," she told her sister. She began to grow restless, and at last Helen agreed to take her home.

They sent word they were coming, and William went out and sat on the porch to watch for them. He could see the buggy turn the corner by Lemuel Wilson's house. It had to come two blocks to reach home. He could see Helen sitting very straight, as she always did, holding the reins as if the mild, easily jogging old horse were a spirited and tricky roadster. He could see Delia sitting beside her, and it seemed to him suddenly as if all the years between had dropped away and Delia were a girl again and he her eager lover.

He rose from his chair and went down to the gate, trembling, because he was not really strong—no man could live as he had lived for five long years and not lose vigor—and Delia leaned forward in her seat with white face and startled eyes as she beheld him.

Then, around the corner of the street nearest home, a boy came on a bicycle; riding recklessly, he turned toward Hel-

en's horse and darted under its very nose. The horse reared suddenly, and the buggy swerved. Everything seemed to turn black before William's eyes. He forgot his weak heart, he forgot his lack of strength. He flung open the gate and ran out into the road. Another man who happened to be passing was nearer and quicker and had reached the horse's head. Helen and Delia were unhurt. Delia clambered out of the buggy and embraced her husband as he stood there, trembling, in the road. They walked into the house.

"It don't seem as if it could be true," said Delia. "Aren't you dreadfully tired? You mustn't try to do too much at first—"

William interrupted her. "I ain't trying to do too much," he asserted.

But he was very tired and willing to lean back in his chair and rest for a little while after he became convinced that Delia was unhurt. They sat on the porch together later in the evening, while Mrs. Rennert made the dishwashing last as long as she could before joining them.

"You seem just like yourself, William," said Delia.

William sat up very straight in his chair and made an astonishing declaration. "The only thing that was the matter with me," he said, "was that you are a darn sight too good for me!"

"Don't swear, William," said Delia softly, and she patted his hand. She was thinking. "I don't believe I'll wait on William as much as I used to," she decided.



### Discoveries in the Land of Song

LAYMEN employing famous musicians to give benefit concerts learn many things not suspected by the general public. They learn, for instance, that a certain prima donna who is renowned as the most gracious and generous singer in America requires payment in full at her home before she will start for the concert hall. They learn that another celebrated songbird runs up her price three hundred dollars for each time that she reappears in the divorce columns. They learn that one distinguished pianist insists that the grand piano be placed on the wrong side of the stage, so that when he comes on, he may, in simulated anger, electrify the audience by seizing the instrument in his muscular arms and whirling it into proper position unaided. These little excursions into the realm of art are a great education for innocent music lovers.

A lady member of a benefit committee in an Eastern city was making inquiries of an auditorium employee as to the prices that she might successfully charge for tickets to her entertainment.

"You had John McCormack last year," she said. "What did you ask for seats?"

"From three dollars down."

"Three dollars? Why, the best seats for Paderewski were only two and a half."

"I know, ma'am," said the auditorium man. "But Paderewski sings in Italian, you see, while McCormack sings in English. People are willing to pay fifty cents more to hear something they can understand."

# Mr. Copp on the Job

by Holman F. Day



ILLUSTRATED BY VICTOR PERARD

THE meek consort of the sheriff of Cuxabexis County seldom ventured into Sheriff Sproul's office, even though their residence was so near, in a wing of the county buildings, that Cap'n Sproul could sniff all the flavors of the impending boiled dinner that day. When the lady of his heart did descend on him in his inner sanctuary, it signified that she was impelled by what she considered necessity.

She came. Her face, when he whirled around and stared at her over his spectacles, expressed much concern.

"There's somebody—there's company come to have dinner with us," she stammered. "I thought I'd run down and warn you."

"Well, I don't see any especial need of warning me, unless it's an anaconda dropped in," observed the cap'n. "What ails you?"

"It's Cousin Aretas Copp."

"You don't mean to tell me that there's a cousin in your family that I've missed, do you, after the nine hundred and fifty-six I've had come in and feed on me?"

"Aaron Sproul, there have never been so many as that!"

"It has seemed like it. I lost count after five hundred and guessed at the rest."

"I know my folks ain't popular with you, Aaron, and they ought to know enough to stay away. But when a cousin does drop in, bag and baggage, you can't drive him out on the street, for the speech of the people."

"Bag and baggage? Has another one of them cussed all-devouring cutworms come to board on us?"

"He has brought his valises, but maybe he intends to pass on. I couldn't ask him first crack how long he intends to stay. I hope common politeness ain't dead in our family, Aaron." She bridled a bit. "And you haven't got to do the cooking."

"I wish I had time to," he rejoined tartly. "After he had et one meal I'd fix up for him, he'd start for somewhere on the dead run, holding his hands over the place where he ached worst."

"I know Aretas Copp is a good, well-meaning man—though he has been on his travels and I haven't seen him for a long time," she declared, showing cousinly loyalty. "And he amounts to some-



thing in the world. He gave *that* to me to show what he is."

She laid a dirty, cheaply printed card in front of her husband. Its legend read: "President Aretas Copp, Head of the Fearless Sons of Reform of the Universe. Gird on the Armor. Go Forth. Give Battle."

The cap'n surveyed the hand smooches, back and front. He handed the card to his wife.

"Better give it back to him. Seems like an old keepsake that he's very fond of."

"You are always so sarcastic, Aaron, where my relatives are concerned."

"Then let 'em stop trying to borrow money and sell me spavined hosses and gold-mine stock, get their meals somewhere else, and generally and individually leave me alone. I suppose this critter is unbuttoning his vest, getting ready to gobble that b'iled dinner?"

"We've got enough for all, and, thank the Lord, I never turned the hungry and deserving away from my door."

"Nor I," averred Cap'n Sproul. "But there ain't any thankfulness or appreciation in a cousin. They take it all as a matter of right and don't go away when you want 'em to. Oh, we won't have any more jawing about it, Louada Murilla. I know my manners. Give him the spare room and order in more groceries. I've seen cousins before, and I know what to expect."

A tall man, with his lower features effectually muffled in whiskers, rose and gave effusive greeting to the cap'n when he went upstairs in answer to the summons of the dinner bell.

"I am glad to be in the domicile of a high sheriff," declared the guest. "I chanced to observe in the public print that you, whom I recognized as a cousin by marriage, had been elevated to this responsible position, and I immediately hied hither in order to bask for a time in the atmosphere of reform which I know must surround your august office. There

is a bond of unity between us, sir, and all my resources in the line of investigation of reform are at your service. I shall most heartily coöperate with you. I am an expert in the ethics of reform, and therefore I can assist you in the execution of its practicalities. I shall be glad to gradually expound to you the——"

"Hadn't we better pull right up to the table now?" suggested Mrs. Sproul, not liking the expression that was hardening the cap'n's features. "A boiled dinner gets to be terribly salvy when it's cold."

"Certainly," agreed Mr. Copp, leading the cap'n to the table with clutch about the host's elbow. "We will continue this interesting discussion over the noble viands the gods have provided and which a goddess of the culinary art has served for us. As I was saying——"

The steady breeze of his loquacity fanned on and on through the mat of beard that waved in front of his face.

Cap'n Sproul humped his back and proceeded to load the guest's plate. The huge platter in front of him was heaped high, and the cap'n shoveled from it desperately, like a man who saw only one way of checking this interminable flow of speech. He set a thick slice of corned beef, fringed with yellow fat, in the center of the plate. He daubed on a hillock of cabbage, he forked on yellow carrots, a huge, red beet, disks of amber turnip, several fat, mealy potatoes, and then gave a glowering side glance at the booming oracle on his left. He seemed to apprehend that the impedimenta on the plate were not sufficient to check that rapidly working orifice of a mouth, and, in spite of his wife's horrified gasp, he heaped on another round of vegetables and handed the assembled mountain of food to his guest.

Mr. Copp received it with great amiability, snapped out his handkerchief,

and began to eat with gusto. But he also continued to talk without diminution of tone or flow of words. He seemed to reserve one side of his mouth for mastication and the other side for elocution.

Once or twice Cap'n Sproul poised knife and fork and attempted to say something. He thought he was grabbing an opportunity when Mr. Copp, his thumb measuring the right length on his knife blade, was shooting an unusual load of vegetables at his mouth. But the cap'n was unable to get out more than one word at each try. He ate his dinner, pushed away from the table without ceremony, and started for the door.

"Take your time," he snapped over his shoulder. "I've got business downstairs."

As he slammed the door, he heard Mr. Copp say that he would take another round of boiled dinner—"a little of each, please."

His first caller, on his arrival in his office, was his friend Hiram Look, proprietor of Look's Leviathan Circus and Aggregation of Wonders. Mr. Look was big, broad, bland, and gracious—and when he was especially gracious, Cap'n Sproul was promptly on his guard. He had found that this mood in Hiram Look usually predicated what the cap'n termed "some kind of a gum game."

Mr. Look proffered one of his big cigars, sat down in the nearest chair, crossed his legs, spread his fingers, drew his thumbs slowly across the upper expanse of his white waistcoat, propped open his coat lapels, and stuck the thumbs in the armholes of the waistcoat.

"Aaron," said he, "I hope you and me ain't going to have a mite of trouble over this new spec I've gone into."

"Don't know what you're speaking about," said the cap'n, his suspicions promptly flaming. "But your hopes

about trouble depend on what new rinktunk-tum you're planning now."

"Of course, I understand that your job is sheriff of this county," pursued the old showman. "But I hope you're going to put friendship ahead of your job. Not that I'm going to ask you to do one namable thing that ain't all right and square. But a sheriff can make a lot of trouble, sometimes, in meddling about things that ain't any of his business. All I ask you is not to go out of your way."

"You seem to be traveling some distance out of yours," suggested the sheriff. "Suppose you tell me what the matter is with you."

"It's simple and straight to the point. I've just come from a meeting of the Cuxabexis County Fair Association, and it wound up in a fight."

"Never heard of one of your meetings that didn't."

"But this is a final fight, I reckon. Trustees have all resigned. And here's the fair only three days away! I've posted bonds and have taken over the whole thing. I'm going to run it single-handed. And, by the gads, I know how to run a show—that's my business. Them old barnyard scratchers who have floundered around as trustees for the last few years have put the whole thing into the ground. That's the trouble—causes the fights. The association is busted. I'm going to play it on a fifty-fifty split, guarantee expenses and interest on the debt for this year, and I'll clean up an honest dollar."

"Well!" snapped the sheriff, plainly taking no interest in this preamble.

"I've got to make my best money out of the concessions. The entry fees will hardly pay the premiums and purses. The stipend that the State allows the Cuxabexis Fair is six hundred dollars. If I don't get that stipend, I won't break even."

"Why do you think you won't get it?"



*"Am I right in assuming that it is some kind of a public show that is under discussion?" "This is a private——" began the sheriff.*

asked the sheriff, boring his friend with keen eyes.

"Well, you understand what a lot of old-fogy notions some cussed cranks have about what constitutes the right kind of a show for a county-fair midway." Hiram crossed his legs in the opposite direction. "It would be just like some old fool to make complaint to you, and then any official action on your part—raiding or any arrests—would

put the kibosh on us. It would be in the newspapers, and the State treasury would hold back that stipend, for the law obliges them to throw down an association where charges are made."

"You go ahead and run your show according to Hoyle, and you'll find me easy and sooavable. You run it according to the tactics of old Cap'n Kidd, the pirate chief, and you'd better keep a sharp eye aloft. I shall swoop."

"That's a devil of a stingy guarantee from a friend! I want to inform you that everything on the grounds is going to be clean, moral, and uplifting."

Mr. Copp stamped breezily into the office just in season to overhear that dictum.

"Good!" he indorsed. "I have just been telling my cousin, the sheriff, that I hied hither in order to bask in the atmosphere of reform. What I have just heard informs me that I'm in the right place. Go right ahead. Don't mind me. I'll just sit here and bask."

Hiram Look rolled his long cigar from one corner of his mouth to the other, stared at the visitor, and then shifted his gaze to the sheriff.

"This is a private——" began the sheriff.

"Most certainly I am not going to hear a public functionary, sitting in an office room that is owned by the people, administering the affairs of the county—it cannot be that I shall hear an official declare that there is any of the people's business that must be conducted behind closed doors—whispered behind the private palm. Oh, no! Such is not the spirit of reform. It would be sad for me to go hence, to and fro among the people, and confess to them in sorrow that the high sheriff thinks it necessary to sit in secret conference regarding—am I right in assuming that it is some kind of a public show that is under discussion?"

The sheriff flushed. The innuendo pricked him. He knew he could not afford to have the word go out that he was secretly shielding Hiram Look in any of his schemes. This meddlesome marplot had him in a corner.

"There are no secrets——"

"Good! I'm glad to be assured of what I already felt certain. No secrets in an office consecrated to the morals of the people! You may proceed, gents, and if I can contribute from my experience and wisdom—having had much to

do with uplift in all parts of the country—I shall not hesitate to do so."

"This fair I'm going to run——" began Hiram.

"There is nothing more valuable in education and uplift than a fair—a merry convocation of the people where they may behold the fruits of industry, clasp hands in fraternal greeting, and muse together on the progress the world has made. I shall throw myself heartily into this project—having a little leisure on my hands at the present. As president of the Fearless Sons of Reform of the Universe, appearing officially, I shall not detract from the glory of the occasion, to say the least. Yes, I shall throw myself in most heartily."

Hiram Look removed his hands from his waistcoat armholes, and appeared to be quite ready to throw Mr. Copp out.

"A fair where the folks meet to muse may be——"

"And it is!" declared the reformer.

"This *ain't*! It's a show where——"

"Where art shall walk hand in hand with industry and the sun of uplift shall shine over all. I will expound to you two gents——"

"You'll have to excuse *me*," said Mr. Look, snapping himself up and starting for the door. "I'm running a county fair single-handed, and I've got eleven thousand things to tend to."

Mr. Copp leaped after him.

"We can discuss our mutual affairs as we stroll—as the ancient peripatetics walked under the arches and——" The door banged behind them, and Cap'n Sproul noted that, as they marched down the street, Mr. Copp was clinging to Mr. Look's arm.

"If them two poultices don't draw a blister on each other, then I'm no judge," affirmed the cap'n.

When Mr. Look returned on the gallop to the sheriff's office an hour later, he displayed acute symptoms that seemed to justify the cap'n's prediction.

"Will you kindly inform me what in the name of the seventeen pink-eyed sisters of the suffering Nicodemus you mean by sicking that muff-faced old hossfly onto me?" demanded the showman.

"Thought you invited him along to continue that interesting discussion," returned the sheriff blandly. "You seemed to go off gay and social together."

"He ain't let me say a word. Has stuck himself into my business clear to them old pop eyes of his. Says he's going to be a special moral agent for the sheriff's office."

"Says so, hey?"

"Says he's going to censor my fair—going to uplift it. Calls himself president of some kind of universal ding-bussets. I want to warn you, Sheriff Sproul, that when I get to shining, you'd better pull that one pertickler relative of yours into the shade. He'll get sun-struck."

"He ain't any relative that I'm especial choice of."

"But he advertises himself as a relative, and if he comes onto my fair ground and goes to moral uplifting my midway show, where'n blazes am I going to get off?"

"That old gasbag ain't running my office."

"But what if he comes down there fussing things up?"

"You go ahead and run your fair the way you think it ought to be run, and I'll see to it that nobody bothers you."

"That official?"

"That's official."

Hiram started for the door.

"Look here, how did you manage to shake that bloodsucker off'n you?" asked the sheriff. "If you can give me any points short of assassinating him, I'll be much obliged to you."

"Beat him running upstairs in an office building—run down the back stairs and got away through an alley that he didn't know about, being a stranger.

If you feel like saying so, you tell him that if he chases me any more, I'll smother him in his whiskers and toss him into an ash can."

But Showman Look did not fulfill that threat when he met Mr. Copp on the street a little later. Mr. Copp accosted him meekly and humbly—so apologetically that Mr. Look was immediately impressed.

"I want to ask your pardon, sir, for trying to tell you your business," said the reformer.

Mr. Look melted only a bit and nodded.

"I feel that I annoyed you by talking too much."

"You could make it a lot stronger and I wouldn't dispute you."

"Every man has his faults, but not every man knows how to correct them. I shall keep still after this and bow to a man who knows more than I do."

"Thank you for showing good judgment," returned Mr. Look stiffly.

"I have been asking about you in your town here. I find that all the public affairs you have managed have been artistic successes. They all say you certainly do know how to run a show."

"I made it my business for thirty years." Hiram inserted a thumb in his waistcoat armhole. This humble praise was appealing.

"The only reason I talked was to show you that I was interested in the grand art of entertaining the public properly. But you know the art so much better than I, I have no more to say."

"Go on ahead," invited Mr. Look affably. "When a man talks good sense, I like to listen."

"I would love to sit at your feet and watch your art in operation. I would even like to assist in a humble way, so as to come in closer contact with your genius. Thinking over what I said in my nervousness in first meeting a prominent man like you, I'm afraid you



might have thought. I was a reform crank."

"Well, I did get the notion that you thought a midway show ought to be an exhibition of croshtay work with an occasional solo on a jew's-harp."

"Thus do many words breed confusion," sighed Mr. Copp. "I hardly dare to speak two words to you again for fear of being misunderstood."

"Now that you're down to cases, go on—go on," cried the showman, getting his other thumb into an armhole. This fawning respect and awe pleased him.

"I view all things on the higher level," proceeded his new friend. "Of course, the ignorant do not understand real art as you understand it, or as I do, if I may be permitted to rise to your level for a moment. One of the most beautiful and artistic exhibitions I ever witnessed was a dance of the mystic East, performed at a fair by sinuous beauties who portrayed the wonderful grace the Creator implanted in the human body. All too seldom are people permitted to view such exhibitions of the human mechanism."

Hiram Look drummed his fingers with vigor on his white waistcoat and surveyed Mr. Copp with fresh interest.

"You say this thing you admired was a dance by—by Orient beauties?"

"It was done by so-called nautch dancers. As a student of history, I am quite sure this graceful series of evolutions entertained the sages and patriarchs of yore."

"That show didn't jar any reform ideas you had, hey?"

"My dear sir, as a student of the dances of history, I ventured to stand up before the tent—accepting a small honorarium for my services, though I would have served gladly without fee or price in order to inform people in regard to true art—I stood before the tent, I say, and explained the artistic and historical value of the dance and

thereby disarmed those who might viciously and ignorantly criticize."

"You mean to tell me that you've been a barker for a hootchie-cootchie show?" demanded the astonished showman.

"I prefer to put it the other way—on an artistic basis," averred Mr. Copp mildly.

"Look here, do you want a job?"

"What would be its nature?"

"Putting my midway shows on an artistic basis. You seem to know your business."

"But I might behold things that would offend my artistic nature. Now, gambling——"

"If you can swallow a hootchie-cootchie show and explain it away artistically, I reckon you and me and my midway bunch ain't going to come to blows," declared the old showman. "I'm on. You want an artistic price for artistic services. Well, I'm no piker when I'm getting the goods for my money."

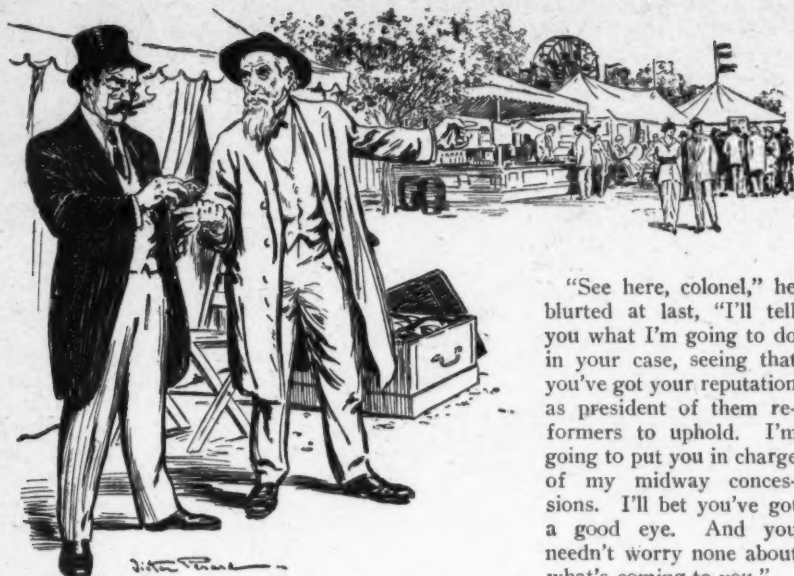
He dove into his trousers pocket, glanced about to make sure there were no observers, and peeled off two ten-dollar bills.

"Simply a retaining fee to clinch the business you and me will do together later," Hiram assured Mr. Copp, tendering the money.

"No, sir! Not one cent!" And Mr. Copp said it in a way that showed he meant what he said. "Don't offend me by insisting. We will coöperate. I'd like to associate myself with you, for the experience will be valuable. Then later if—if I have been of slight service——"

"You don't have to worry, old top," announced Hiram, putting up his money and slapping his pocket.

"Being associated with you in some slight capacity—sitting at your feet, as it were—I shall be able to understand the inside much more readily than an outsider would, I'm sure. And having



*"It's the money for the petrified Fiji mermaid concession."*

such an understanding, I do not anticipate that I shall see anything to offend my moral sense. Of course, I have a stand to take as president of the Sons of Reform," pursued Mr. Copp. Hiram blinked rapidly for a few moments. He caught a queer glint in his new associate's eyes.

"Not meaning that you'd want me to disappoint citizens who'd tend out on the fair clamoring for a few chances to make a little ready cash?" expostulated the showman. "The games always suit the crowd, and the boys that run the games can afford to come across with some real money for concessions. I don't get rich off'm the petrified Mormon giant and the three-legged hoss, you understand."

"I suppose I'll be in a position to inspect the games at close range, won't I?" ventured the censor.

Hiram gave Mr. Copp a prolonged looking over.

"See here, colonel," he blurted at last, "I'll tell you what I'm going to do in your case, seeing that you've got your reputation as president of them reformers to uphold. I'm going to put you in charge of my midway concessions. I'll bet you've got a good eye. And you needn't worry none about what's coming to you."

"I'm glad you've got so much confidence in my judgment," returned Mr. Copp gratefully. And he passed on.

The former proprietor of Look's Leviathan Circus, taught by years of hard experience to distrust his fellow men, gazed after his new ally with narrowing eyes.

"I reckon I can sniff blackmail about as far as the next one," he soliloquized, "and it ain't any kind of an Araby-the-blest perfume that that old bug-eye gives off. However, having had experience with that mouth of his, I'm willing to invest something to plug it. He's got me scared on that point. And if he's a natural crook, he certainly does seem like a good one—so I figger I'll get my money's worth."

His precipitancy in offering Mr. Copp such an important billet as he had intrusted to him bothered him a bit, now that he came to survey the matter more carefully. He really did not know anything about this stranger who had suc-

ceeded in planting himself so masterfully in the middle of the Look enterprises. The reflection that Mr. Copp had confessed to barking for a hootchie-cootchie show consoled him considerably, although Mr. Copp had blandly sugar-coated his activity in that line.

"And a reformer that's bossing a midway under pay ain't liable to be so savage as one that's outside peeking through the fence," decided Hiram. "Furthermore, he's a cousin—even though he is only a buttonhole one—of the high sheriff of this county—and I'll advertise that, and it's going to take more or less of the cuss off'm anything the boys may put over. When I take good money for concessions, I can't tie the boys down to peddling popcorn and flipping tiddly-winks. Oh, on the whole, I reckon I'm consid'able of a diplomat."

But to Cap'n Sproul, who came dragging himself to the supper table that day like a convict to execution, Mr. Aretas Copp did not display any of that improved and repentant side of his disposition. He began assertive promulgation of his views as soon as the sheriff hove in sight, and dinned his moral principles into the sheriff's ears as he ate. At last Cap'n Sproul turned on him and pounded knife and fork on the table, wrath breaking bounds.

"Shut up that cussnation bowwow-ing!" he raved. "I don't care who ye be, cousin or what not! I don't care if you're old Aunt Rhody. And you keep still, too!" he informed his wife, who was making horrified protest. "I'm talking now. When I can't eat the vittles I pay for and have peace in my house while I'm eating 'em, I'll know the reason why. Shut up, and stay shut up!"

"If you don't care to have valuable information and important truths imparted while you are at the festal board," said Mr. Copp, with much dignity, "I will hold my peace."

"You'd better, or else a dustpan will hold your pieces," declared the cap'n,

not a bit impressed by his guest's dignity.

That evening Mr. Copp bearded Cap'n Sproul in the sheriff's office.

"I have come on strictly official business, and will make it short and to the point," announced the caller. "I come to you, high sheriff of this county, as president of the Sons of Reform of the Universe."

"And I'll bet fifty dollars to ten that you're the only son in the whole gommaged society," snapped the cap'n. "Nobody ever heard of any such bunch of critters."

"I'm not to blame for your limited knowledge. You have shown that you are not willing to be informed. But no matter about that. I want to know to what extent you are going to back me up—you being high sheriff of this county—when I proceed to investigate moral conditions at the fair which is about to be held in this town."

The sheriff glared at him and made no reply.

"I shall probably bring many matters, hour by hour, from those fair grounds to you, and I want you here in your office ready to take prompt action on my complaints."

The sheriff set his hands on his desk and derricked himself up.

"You think you're going to tell me how to run my office?"

"Perhaps so, if you don't come to the scratch and back me up."

"What right have you got to come into this county and meddle in things that are none of your business?"

"I am the president of the——"

"I don't care if you're the President of the United States, with a side job as King of Peruvia. I'm running the sheriff's office in this county, and I don't want any advice or help when it comes to deciding what's allowed at a county fair. I order you to keep your old stubborn nose out of this thing."

"Do you mean that as an official order?"

"That's an official order!" roared the sheriff, banging down his fist.

"I don't consider any order as official till it has been put in writing."

"Then I'll put it in writing almighty sudden," declared the high sheriff, intent only upon suppressing this nuisance who insisted on butting into the duties of the legally qualified officers of the shrievalty. He sat down at his desk, jabbed his pen into the ink with venom, and wrote. He read as he wrote, his tones rasping with fury:

"I hereby forbid Reformer Aretas Copp——"

"I shall not consider it official and binding on me unless I am referred to by my right title," stated Mr. Copp. "Full title at that."

"You can have it just as official and binding as you want it," agreed the sheriff. He completed the screed and handed it to his guest.

"You disobey that order, and I'll arrest you for interfering with officers."

Mr. Copp tucked the document into a compartment of his slab-sided wallet. Cap'n Sproul noted the care with which the paper had been "salted," and momentary suspicion of the reformer's ultimate motives assailed him.

"Look here, you old snooper, what do you propose to do with that paper?" he demanded.

"I shall gaze on it from time to time, when I see evil rampant, and shall realize that it has been through no fault of mine that my work of uplift has been stopped—and thus I shall comfort my soul," stated Mr. Copp, starting for the door.

"Plaster it onto your soul, where it will do the most good—if you've got enough soul for it to stick to. But outside of that, mind your eye how you use it."

Mr. Copp paused at the door.

"Sheriff Sproul, I am beginning to

suspect that my presence here as guest at bed and board is not pleasing to you."

"You're a good guesser."

"Then I shall shake the dust of your threshold from my feet." He departed, carrying away the valises which he had set down in the outside office.

On the first day of the fair Mr. Copp became an unobtrusive manager of the midway on behalf of Hiram Look, who was harried and hurried by his manifold duties. Mr. Copp's delegated responsibility was to assign locations.

"I feel that I am a very humble agent," he informed Hiram. "It is not my nature to make my activities conspicuous. I shall ask the privilege of reporting to you frequently, in order that I may be sure I'm making no mistakes. I want to sit at your feet, as it were."

"Look here, Copp, I'd advise you not to sit around these feet of mine too close to-day. They're moving pretty fast and may bump you over. I can't be bothered too much with you."

Mr. Copp was back inside of ten minutes. He carried a wad of money in his hands. He offered it to Hiram.

"What's this?" demanded the showman.

"It's the money for the petrified Fiji mermaid concession."

"Look here, Copp, I told you not to handle money. You're a stranger to me."

"But I took the liberty in this case, honored master. It was due you and I took time by the forelock. As I told you, I have gone about my duties so unobtrusively that it is not generally known along the midway that I have official connection. I am now engaged in inspecting. Will you count that money?"

"Here's seventy-five dollars," declared Hiram, looking at his agent with considerable astonishment, "and that mermaid concession was let for twenty-five dollars."



"Where is he? Get him—arrest him!" he panted, struggling up from his chair.

"So I knew, from the list you gave me. But I discovered, in the back of the tent, a canvas pen where a very able phrenologist was practicing his skillful art."

Mr. Copp met Hiram's eyes with bland display of absolute innocence.

"I consider phrenology an exact and noble science and the price of three dollars which is charged there for a full reading and which is collected after the reading by a large and black negro is very reasonable—even though the ignorant who do not appreciate phrenology may consider the charge somewhat high. At any rate, I informed the mermaid manager that, under the circumstances, he must pay fifty dollars more—and advance payment on the midway, so my slight experience has informed me, is always most satisfactory."

"You took it while the taking was good, is the idea," said his boss approvingly. "Copp, I don't know whether you absorbed that idea by sitting at my feet, as your saying goes, or whether you have had more experience than you let on about. But whichever way it is,

I want to tell you that you have a good working basis to go on."

A few minutes later Mr. Copp returned and broke in on a vociferous argument Chief Look was having with a delegation of horsemen in regard to certain details of entrance fees. Hiram went apart with his insistent agent, displaying much impatience.

"You mustn't keep running to me every two seconds, Copp. Can't you see that I'm——"

"I see. But please take this money. It is yours. I do not like to have possession of another man's money."

"I told you not to handle money for me."

"But I won this in a game where cards are hidden in leather envelopes."

"Who is playing the gazara game on these grounds?" demanded the boss. "I haven't sold any privileges—not yet. I've got to see how the land lies first." He surveyed the two ten-dollar bills which Mr. Copp had turned over.

"It's in the back of the tent which shelters the marvelous educated Peruvian cockatoo," explained the reformer.



"That bat-eared son of a dobo is only paying fifteen dollars for that dyed-pullet fake of his. And running a game, hey?"

"Yes, sir. I ventured to make sure by going in and wagering a small amount. There's the money."

"If you won it, it's yours. He probably spotted you and let you cap it, so as to bribe you."

"It may have been that way, sir. It is hard to fathom all the artfulness of the wicked. But the money is not mine. I'm simply your agent. I act for you. No, I shall not take it. Furthermore, as a reformer, I must look on it as tainted money."

"And you come and poke it at me, hey? Say, look here, I don't know as you're handing me any great compliment, Copp."

"Oh, I didn't mean wrong, sir," apologized Mr. Look's efficient agent. "I look on you as the grand head of all—and I must render to Cæsar all that is Cæsar's—to do with as you see fit. I am most scrupulous in all money matters."

"I ought to be down on that midway, collecting with a club," mourned Mr. Look. "They're trying to put it over on me, knowing I'm working single-handed and am all tied up with the rest of the fair. Copp, you go back down there and you spot every gambling game that's going."

Mr. Copp saluted, and started away.

"Get 'em dead to rights on it—so they can't squeal on the settlement. Get the goods on 'em—play it yourself. You seem to be having luck."

"I can sink my prejudice and play, as a reformer," admitted Mr. Copp. "It will be in the interests of justice—so that my employer may receive what is due."

"I'm glad to find a man who can take a high view of a thing," said Hiram. "Look here, Copp, you seem to have the right streak in you—honesty com-

bined with good business. You get after that midway bunch. Take that list and collect from every cussed one. And if they're running games on the side, get the evidence and then get the goods. Make 'em come across with the cash."

"I will, sir, and I'll hurry to you with each installment."

"Suffering baked apples!" barked the impatient showman, noting that his delegation of horsemen were pawing the turf and that other persons were crowding close, seeking audience. "I can't spend all my time tate-ah-tateing it with you, Copp. You go ahead and collect and keep strict account and come around to me the end of the afternoon."

"I'll hate to be carrying all that money which doesn't belong to me. Another man's money worries me."

"There's just two things for you to worry about, Copp. One is your not getting what's coming to me from them pups and the other is not handing it over to me when you do get it—in a bunch, when you come around this afternoon. And you needn't worry but what you'll get a good drag. You're the kind of a man I like to put onto a job."

But Mr. Look's admiration for his agent did not obscure his judgment, fortified by years of experience with slippery fellow men. After Mr. Copp had started back to the midway, he hastily called one of his special policemen.

"See that whiskered gazoopus sliding along down there? You follow him all day. Keep your eye on him. You can't lose a critter that looks like he does. Don't bother him in anything he puts over on that midway. Understand that! But if he tries to leave these grounds, you gaffe onto him and bring him to me."

The special hurried away on the trail.

"There!" declared Mr. Look, "with a

gasp of satisfaction. "Having got my feet free of that old mess of whiskers sitting at 'em, I can run around now and tend out on my regular business. I'm going to make a honest dollar out of this fair, take it by and large."

Sheriff Sproul's first bulletin from the fair grounds came per mouth of a farmer man who found the cap'n entrenched in his private office.

"I was asked to call in on you by your cousin," explained the farmer man, quailing under the sheriff's scowl. "So I hope you'll excuse me."

"I ain't got any cousin."

"Said he was, and I didn't ask for any birth certificate. He's a man with whiskers and bugged-out eyes, and he says he's seeing things that you ought to see."

"I ain't surprised that a man with eyes that stick out like that old lobster's can see a lot of things, but I ain't interested in him or what he sees."

"But I've seen a few things myself, sheriff. And I believe what your cousin tells me about the rest. They're raising hob down to that fair, gambling and all such. Your cousin sends word to you that they're doing it. Says he hasn't got any authority to act."

"That last is the truth, at any rate," grunted the high sheriff.

"Says he demands that you come down and do your duty."

The sheriff turned his back on this emissary from the hateful Copp, trying to restrain his wrath at being thus baited.

"Ain't you going to obey the call of duty?"

"Not when it's hollered through a tin spout by an old windbag," declared the cap'n.

"I've been stung by one of them critters myself, and I don't consider that's the right kind of talk for a high sheriff to make, unless he's in league with that Hiram Look, as some say he is," cried the offended farmer man.

"Do you stand there and say so?" asked the sheriff, blistering the emissary with his stare.

"I know there's snigdom going on. I can stand here and say that much. A feller stuck a glass bulb filled with red water into my hand when I wasn't looking and made me clinch my fist, and when the red water run into another bulb, he said I had the loony blastitis and charged me a dollar."

"Mebbe you *have* got it and the warning is cheap," stated Cap'n Sproul. "Keep your hands in your pockets after this. Now I don't want to listen to any more yarns sent to me by an old fool who is only trying to pull me into a mess for his own revenge. I know all about what he is up to and what he means by sending word to me," he declared, waving impatient dismissal of the farmer man. "You go back and tell him to keep his nose out of my business. Get out of here!"

To the turnkey the sheriff said, after the farmer man's departure: "If anybody else comes to the door, ask if they've come up here with yawp from the fair grounds. If they have, you keep 'em locked out. I've got plenty of my regular business to tend to without helping Hime Look run his fair or catering to the notions of that old caterpillar named Copp."

Therefore, the high sheriff of Cuxabexis County was contemptuously absent from the fair grounds that day, notwithstanding the fact that urgent appeals beat against the outside door of the jail.

At the close of that lively day Reformer Aretas Copp wended his way to the office of Hiram Look on the fair grounds. Mr. Copp was accompanied by several men, and they all stood in the presence of the sole proprietor of the show and waited until he had sent away the final stragglers who had business with him. Mr. Copp advanced and



*"For a man of your experience to go into business with that cutworm you've just dragged in here shows that you need a guardeen."*

drew attention to his attendants with a wave of his hand.

"I have brought along these gents, Chief Look, because they will support what I shall say. They were present. They saw what happened."

"You needn't mind about any long stories just now, Copp," commented Hiram briskly. "This is my busy time. Hand me that money so I can make up my accounts."

"There will be no long story, sir.

But it is about that money that I'm here to speak—and my unvarnished words will be supported, as I have said. You know what your orders were to me!"

"I remember them."

"You told me to prove beyond peradventure that—that certain things were so."

"I told you to chase around and locate anybody who was running a gambling game, if that's what you're driving

at," snapped Hiram, staring defiance at the little crowd of bystanders. He did not feel that he needed to add to that righteous declaration any of his particular reasons for desiring to hunt out that gambling.

"I did so with varying fortunes," related Mr. Copp. "Here is the special officer, who, so I judge, was ordered by you to accompany me to see—so I am sure, knowing your thoughtful kindness—that nobody did me injury because I bore money on my person. He can affirm that I am telling the truth. He saw. I thank you for him because—"

"He saw what?" roared Hiram. "Get down to cases!"

"He saw me prove that the man who had paid only five dollars for a candy privilege was running the biggest gambling game on the grounds. He wrapped ten and twenty-dollar bills in the papers with the candies. He did it before your eyes. It seemed very easy to win. There were the candies, and—"

"Don't bother to tell me how they run the candy game," yelled Hiram, snapping his fingers impatiently. "I've been in the show business thirty years. What about it—hurry up?"

"I won forty dollars very easily. In my enthusiasm on your behalf I ventured a bit farther and I lost eighty."

"That's all right. Of course, you were wise enough to make him come across with enough to square things when he paid for the concession."

"I'm afraid I got just a little—a bit rattled," confided Mr. Copp sorrowfully. "I had lost some of your money, sir. It was on my conscience. It wasn't mine to lose. I wanted to get it back so that I could face you with calm, unruffled brow—with spirits serene. I kept on playing. Those gents saw me—even the constable saw me."

"Well?" rasped Hiram, anxious to end this palaver.

"I had collected for you about eight hundred dollars. I lost it all in the candy game."

"That's so," affirmed the special officer. "But I had your orders to let him do what he wanted to."

Hiram Look swelled as he sat there in his chair—seemed to expand as if some force were inflating him. But they who waited to hear him explode were disappointed; he merely puffed out his breath in a sighing gasp. That situation was beyond any power of speech—no words of his, he realized, could do it justice.

"Where is he? Get him—arrest him!" he panted, struggling up from his chair.

"Oh, he's been gone some time," said a bystander. "Folded up and skipped away. Reckon he thought he'd made enough for one day."

"Didn't have no orders to interfere with any gents' games," the constable hastened to assert when Hiram whirled on him. "Them as have had experience with you, Mr. Look, don't dast to butt into your affairs without orders."

"You muffle-headed hunk of cat meat!" howled Hiram, advancing on Mr. Copp. "Why didn't you send for the sheriff—complain—have the sheriff arrest that skunk?"

"I have been sending for the sheriff all day, sir. But I have a written order from him not to interfere in his business in any way, shape, or manner. I fear that the sheriff has taken a miff against me for some reason."

He stood there and looked at the flaming Mr. Look, wearing on his countenance the meeching expression of a sick cat. Hiram restrained an impulse to leap upon him and beat that whiskered face into a pulp. He compromised by grabbing Mr. Copp by the collar and hustling him away on the trot.

"We'll see what the sheriff has got

to say about this!" he informed the unresisting reformer.

Sheriff Sproul had very little to say. Furthermore, he had no sympathy for Mr. Look in his troubles, and so declared.

"For a man of your experience to go into business with that cutworm you've just dragged in here shows that you need a guardeen," he observed. "But you needn't apply to have me appointed guardeen. I'd have to devote all my time to you to keep you straight."

Mr. Copp broke into the controversy, after listening to various other remarks.

"Before you two go any farther," he advised, "I'd like to say that though I'm a man naturally meek and long suffering, yet I can't stand too many slings and arrows. If I'm put into jail, I want to say that I have a writing from the high sheriff, officially addressed to me as president of the Sons of Reform, which to an unprejudiced public would seem proof that he was in league with the promoter of that fair and was protecting him. I was ordered, as president of the said Sons of Reform, to keep my hands off."

"You give me that writing or I'll hamstring you," declared the sheriff.

"Search me all you like. You won't find it. I'm no fool, sir. I have put it where it will be safe and ready to hand in case I am persecuted. As for you, Mr. Look, if you see fit to blame me for obeying orders, I shall make complaint to the board of agriculture of the State that you condoned gambling through me—and you won't get that State stipend of six hundred dollars. You observe that in my humble way I know something about what the State treasury does for deserving fairs. In fact," stated Mr. Copp, showing his claws, "I'm now going to start for the outside door. I warn you that I'm

loaded. If you want me to explode, just stick as much as one finger on me—you'll hit the trigger!"

They did not stop him.

"Well, it's the other fellow who got your money, after all," said the cap'n after somewhat prolonged meditation. Mr. Look seemed to be unable to speak. "Not much use in holding old Copp. Let him go. I'm glad he's out from underfoot."

"The other fellow!" raged Hiram Look. "Do you think I've been in the circus business thirty years not to know a brace game after it's been played?" He pointed to an object on the sheriff's desk. It was a gold brick which a victim had given the sheriff for a souvenir. "Sell me that! I'm ripe for any kind of a bunkoer. I'll bet on the shell game. I've got money to throw away. Bring on your flash games. I'll bite at everything."

"You ain't losing your mind, are you?" asked the cap'n.

"No, I've lost it—I'm easy meat from now on."

"But Copp was the one who fooled away your money."

"Copp! Your Cousin Copp! Dad blame ye, he's the brains of that whole scheme! He couldn't get away with my money—and he knew it. And I don't even know how that other fellow looks. They'll meet and whack it up, fifty-fifty. They planned the game before they ever struck this town. Look-a-here, you ever introduce me to any more of your relatives and I'll beat you up!"

The cap'n gave him a long stare, and turned to his desk.

And Hiram, finding no comfort in that broad back, or in anything else at that moment, mentally kissed eight hundred dollars a fond good-by and stamped his way out into the night.





## Our Visitor with the Open Face

By William Seward Foote

OUR confidence was won by the latest addition to the family circle. An open face on which time had left but few marks and those easily read; an alert, almost staccato presence; a ringing, penetrating, and not unmusical voice. Promptness seemed to be an obsession with the newcomer. Promptness to the minute, to the half minute, to the second. In such a presence one felt as if one ought to be doing something on the minute all the time, even though it were far better not to do it at all. I found myself feeling that the only object in going to bed was to get up on time. The disagreeable admonitions of "Poor Richard's Almanac" seemed to be embodied in the newcomer. Promptness, promptness, promptness—every hour, every minute, every second. Be prompt, be prompt, be prompt. And in Heaven's name what was there to do after you waked up on time? What was there to do after you got somewhere on time? Absolutely nothing. I soon learned to loathe the face of the newcomer.

The whole family went promptness mad. They got to church before the sexton, to the motion pictures before the doors were opened. They spent hours waiting for railroad trains to arrive. They became known as nuisances at the dry-goods stores and the public library on account of their habit

of arriving ahead of hours, and waiting with cheerful and offensive resignation for the clerks and librarians. They got up in the middle of the night to welcome the milkman and ask him to please be more prompt. He gave notice, and so did the cook. The family was so prompt at meals that she just couldn't stand it to see folks standing around an hour ahead of time. Our eldest son was so prompt at the bank that he fell under the suspicion of the private detective, who thought he was trying to doctor his books or break into the safe. Our eldest daughter, who teaches school, received notice from the principal, saying it was not necessary to arrive at the school so early that the janitor had to come down three flights of stairs to let her in—and he with his sweeping and dusting and furnaces to look after!

Time wore on, and so did the newcomer, and by this time I had learned to hate the visitor, once saying, when I could not be overheard, "I believe you have wheels." Winter became damp spring. We were so prompt people thought we were late and had just missed something, instead of being so early we had got there before anything was started. I dodged in and out of the house at such unseasonable hours—always hurrying so as to get there ahead of time—that the neighbors thought I was leading a double, if not

a quadruple, life; that I was dodging process servers; that I was a smuggler and smuggled by night; that I had sworn falsely to my income and was trying to avoid the United States government.

The family went to a Sunday-school picnic and were so prompt the children had eaten all their damp little packages and were licking their fingers when the picnic arrived. They were sarcastically advised to stay right where they were and be on time for next year. My wife gave an afternoon tea. The ice cream was melted, the lettuce sandwiches wilted, and the chocolate cold before the bell rang for the first guest.

Our second daughter boasted a regularly calling young man. Every Thursday evening was his schedule, and he was one of the promptest young men I ever knew. Ten-thirty was his time, and at precisely half past ten he was on the front-door step. One night his watch must have been a tick too slow—he must have forgotten to regulate himself by Greenwich Observatory time telegraphed from Washington, D. C.—or our second daughter may have been a shade too fascinating or a thought too clinging. At any rate, he was thirty seconds behind his schedule. And then, what brutality, what violation of the laws of hospitality!

At precisely one second after the half hour there broke out unseemly, insulting, derisive noise, or, rather, a conglomeration of noises—bells, whistles, sirens, ringings, now continuous, then intermittent, then simultaneous, gaining in velocity and volume. At first the unhappy youth thought 'twas a burglar alarm; then that, for reasons known only to ourselves, we had summoned the police and fire departments. Then the truth got into his system—that the alarm clock had been set

against him—presumably by younger brother—and that he had gone by his signals. He did not linger. He flung himself into the black night—faintly lighted by gas from the municipal lighting plant—carrying with him a maiden's dream and a father's hope. And up to date he has returned neither.

We tried to give away the patent, modern, twentieth-century, nickel-plated, double-faced alarm clock—with its continuous scream as of a soul being lowered into hell, and its intermittent cry as of a victim of the Spanish Inquisition—to the neighbors. They looked at us with cold hostility, as if we had proffered the bacillus of typhoid or a culture of smallpox. We sent it by parcel post to my uncle, who has been stone-deaf for fifty years. It was hilariously and noisily on the job coming and going. Uncle sent it back with a chilly note, saying that when he felt the need of a boiler factory by his bedside to soothe his declining years, he would let us know.

I buried it deep in the ash can. The aged man who, with a yet more aged horse, does the family carting, returned the next day limping, patched, and bandaged. He said an infernal machine had gone off in the ash can and startled the horse so that he ran. He himself had been thrown out and suffered from comminutions, fractures, dislocations, nervous shock, and intense mental anguish caused by the knowledge that his horse could and would run. He threatened to sue me for endangering his constitutional right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. He threatened to sue me for malicious mischief, for contributory negligence. He threatened to sue me under the Employers' Liability Act. And he brought back the clock.

Then I got the ax.

# Wetherby Wins His Wife

By Virginia Middleton

Author of "Fleshpots of Egypt," "Philanthropy," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY W. H. LOOMIS

IN Schwartz's Indian and Mexico Curio and General China and Glass Shop—more briefly known as Schwartz's "And So Forth Shop"—its low adobe walls crouched self-effacingly against the vermilion side of the Palace Hotel—Mr. Schwartz wiped the glistening perspiration from his brow and complained to his new assistant, Miss Rheta Loomis, late of the Middle West, concerning the unreasonableness of buyers, the avariciousness of sellers, and the generally deplorable conditions of trade.

"'Aniline dyes!' they says to me. 'Aniline dyes!' Pull that blanket a little to the left, into the shadow, Miss Rheta. Why wouldn't the dyes be aniline, at the price they want to pay for them? What do they know about aniline dyes, anyway? Why ain't aniline dyes as good as these vegetable dyes, anyhow? Ain't civilization going to count for anything? Ain't chemicals more civilized than vegetables, more scientific? These vegetable dyes, an' so I used to tell them, was used when people didn't know no better. But even the Navajo gets to feel the march of progress. It ain't reasonable to expect that he wouldn't. That's what I used to tell 'em," Mr. Schwartz concluded gloomily as he dusted some lumps of turquoise matrix.

"What do you tell them now?" inquired Miss Loomis listlessly, moving an olla from one portion of the counter to another.

"Now I tell them that the dyes is vegetable. That's what I tell 'em." Mr. Schwartz seemed to take a vindictive pleasure in the thought of the directness of his lie. "An' that's what you tell 'em, too, if I ain't in the store when they come."

"What makes you think anybody's coming?" inquired Miss Loomis with faint, disdainful irony. "I've been here three days, and though I can understand your hirin' a clerk for the sake of company, I haven't seen any other reason why you need one."

"Three days, yes, but one of them was Sunday, an' the train never comes in on Sunday. Monday, she don't come in because of that washout the other side of Deming; but she'll be in some time to-day," Mr. Schwartz concluded with hopeful certainty.

"Well, I ain't so much interested about the train's comin' in as I am about the train's goin' out," said Miss Loomis candidly, dropping upon a canvas camp chair, and staring at a case of decorated china. "I might as well tell you the truth first as last, Mr. Schwartz. I don't think Copper's going to suit me."

"You leave me without notice, an' you get no money," declared Mr. Schwartz excitedly.

"I'm givin' you notice now," replied Miss Loomis mildly. "I won't go before the end of the two weeks I came on trial for, but I really think you'd better be lookin' around for some one

else. Copper City"—Miss Loomis rolled a pair of fine blue eyes until they commanded, through the show window, the prospect of the Copper City National Bank across the street—"don't measure up to my idea of a live town."

Before Mr. Schwartz could make any defense of Copper City, a cloud of white alkali dust blew between Miss Loomis and the bank. Sound followed the sight so closely as to be interpenetrative with it—the sound of shouting, whooping, and yelling. Mr. Schwartz's forehead contracted with a look of pain; Miss Loomis' languid eyes brightened with a look of interest.

"I guess some of the boys is coming to town," she observed hopefully.

"It's that devil, Wetherby," snapped Mr. Schwartz angrily, as a rearing, plunging, bucking pony came to a halt in front of the Palace Hotel's door. Seated upon the pony, encouraging him in his equine demonstrations, was a tall young man, from whose lips the shouts had proceeded and were still proceeding. "Don't go to the door—he's liable to shoot your head off!" the storekeeper added as Miss Loomis made for the door.

"Oh, do you think he would?" She hesitated, looking doubtfully from her employer to the mad centaur outside. Her blue eyes were bright with excitement, and there was a delicate color in her fair cheeks.

"I know he would," replied Schwartz with conviction. "Didn't he shoot a hole through my window the last time he came to town?"

Miss Loomis' admiring eyes were glued to the pane through which she could observe young Wetherby's performances outside. He had brought his horse to a rigid standstill, and bestrode him now with the dignity of a cavalry statue, without, however, ceasing to yell. He seemed to Miss Loomis well to repay her study. Now that the dust

which had heralded his approach had subsided and her view was comparatively unobscured, she saw a tall, lean young man, browned almost to Mexican darkness, but with a mustache that glittered golden in the bright sunlight and with hair almost as fair as her own showing beneath his high, peaked sombrero. The accouterments of his docile pony marked the high limit of Mexican saddlery; they were carved leather and silver. The scarlet handkerchief that was knotted around his bare brown throat was silk. She thought that his butternut-colored riding shirt was also of silk, from the way in which its folds clung to and caressed the magnificently knit frame beneath it. She caught the gleam of brilliant white teeth as the shouts proceeded from Mr. Wetherby's mouth. Altogether, the sight that broke the dull monotony of Copper's early afternoon was one that stirred Miss Rheta Loomis' heart as that organ had never yet been stirred in all its nineteen years of equable beating.

All too soon the vision was reft from her. The sleeping town awoke at the imperative summons of Bud Wetherby. Companions, cronies, sprang up as if by magic. In another instant Mr. Wetherby's horse was tied to one of the hitching posts in front of the hotel, and Mr. Wetherby, attended by a friendly suite of followers, was disappearing toward the Palace bar. Mr. Schwartz breathed a sigh of temporary relief.

"Well, I guess we're safe till he gets himself soused," he was murmuring, when a second thought seemed to occur to the merry-maker.

"Let's clear out the Jew's joint!" were the horrible words borne to the waiting ears of Mr. Schwartz. He rushed to slam his door as Mr. Wetherby reached the threshold. Some of the more timorous souls among Mr. Wetherby's retinue were heard to say something about the sheriff.

"Ah, to hell with the sheriff!" cried the jovial young gentleman. "I'm in town to limber up. We'll begin by auctioning off everything in the Jew's place—all the machine-made blankets and all the colored-glass jewels. I'll clear you up a tidy price, Schwartz, old boy! As an auctioneer, I'm a bird!"

He was inside the shop now, and Rheta, half fascinated, half terrified, had shrunk low behind the counter, over which she stared with bright, half-frightened eyes. Shrilly, half tearfully, Schwartz was in one breath threatening his visitor with all the penalties of the law and entreating mercy, while he hopped about before him, trying to impede his progress.

"You drunken loafer!—You thief! You—you—your hoodlum!" He spat the last word out triumphantly, as if in it he had reached the sought-for climax of vituperation. "Yes, yes! *Ja, ja!* You hoodlum! Ain't you got no respect for a lady?"

"Lady!" shouted Bud. "You mean to tell me you've got one of them fake squaws weavin' blankets or baskets back in there?" He tried to peer across the counter and through the little door at the back of the shop separating it from the storage department. "That ain't right of you, Schwartz! It's bad enough when tourists are around, but it's criminal when there ain't any tourist. I'll auction her the first thing. What does a man like you want?"—he had his hands upon the little gate giving admission

behind the counter, as if he were prepared to vault it—"with an Indian woman? Ain't you got a nice fat wife of your own in your new green cottage?" Laughter, daring, bravado, sparkled in his face.

Suddenly his eyes became fixed. His animation died. He had become aware of Rheta Loomis hiding behind the show case. His body, tense for the contemplated spring, relaxed. His hands upon the little gate became limp. He



"It's that devil, Wetherby," snapped Mr. Schwartz, as a rearing, plunging, bucking pony came to a halt in front of the Palace Hotel's door.



shuffled erect, even as Rheta, on the other side of the counter, stood up and blushing met his gaze.

"Excuse me, miss," said Bud Wetherby woodenly to Rheta Loomis. "I didn't know there was a lady present. I didn't go for to frighten you. I—I—" His tongue felt cumbrous and awkward in his mouth; he could not frame the words he wished to use. He could not meet the bright blue eyes turned toward him. He turned furiously upon his followers. "Get out of here, you intrudin' loafers!" he shouted angrily, and drove them all before him like a country housewife shooing her hens.

All of Mr. Bud Wetherby's appearances in Copper City had been occasions from which history was reckoned by the inhabitants of that town. One was noted as the time when he had shot the necks off two dozen liquor bottles in less than three minutes; one as the time when he had playfully locked the proprietor of the Palace Hotel in one of his own closets, and had proceeded, with the help of congenial spirits, to administer the affairs of the hostelry on a lavish basis for three or four hours. There had also been the occasion when he had given the school a half holiday by the kindly expedient of kidnaping the schoolmaster. His feats with alcohol on these occasions were prodigious; so were his antics as a horseman.

But to-day was destined to be longer remembered than any of those on which he had played his sophomoric pranks. It went down in history as the time when Bud Wetherby, after having ridden into town conspicuously bent upon "raising merry hell," as the citizens put it concisely and very truly, rode quietly out again without having so much as fired a shot into the air to advertise his presence; without having taken a drink to remove from his throat the dust of the road that lay between him and Buena Vista Ranch, forty miles to the

north, to which he was attached; without having cut a single caper beyond the few and unoriginal ones that had marked his entrance into town.

Copper was more dazed by his departure in such fashion that it had ever been dazed by the uproar that had marked his previous visits. And the young ladies of Copper, of whom there were eight or ten, were in general rather affronted that it had remained for a stranger to produce so prompt an effect upon Bud—an unknown little person, a mere accident in Copper, her presence due to Mr. Schwartz's amazing freak of advertising in a Chicago Sunday paper for a young lady clerk, after he had quarreled with the entire clerkly supply of his own town; and to the more amazing coincidence that Miss Loomis, bored and listless in the Kankakee Ladies' and Children's Emporium, had read his advertisement.

The young ladies of Copper reflected darkly that Bud Wetherby had never seemed to be aware of their attractive existences; and until to-day, when the news spread like wildfire through the town that Bud, the roisterer, had been routed by a single glance from a pair of blue eyes, the fact of his indifference to them had never troubled the belles of Copper. Bud had not been a desirable *parti*; he had not been an addition to the social life of the community when he visited it. He held too firmly to the rowdy tradition that Copper, in its decorous middle age, was trying, quite successfully, to forget.

As for Rheta, she went about for the rest of the day in a pleasing sort of trance. Her eyes took no note of anything before her, being filled with the vision of a mad but glorious young centaur, terrorizing her abject little employer. It seemed to her that she had never seen any one so magnificent. She thought, with positive aversion, instead of with the merely listless indifference she had been wont to feel, of her fel-

low clerks in the Kankakee Emporium, of the occasional young men who had "beaued" her to Friday night prayer meeting at the Methodist church. How right, how fated, had been her leaving it all—the dingy dullness of her boarding house, the dreary monotony of the store, the deadly sameness of the young men! How wise the reckless impulse that had invested half her savings in a ticket for Copper City! And as she congratulated herself, her silly little employer stood before her, rubbing his hands with great satisfaction, and remarking:

"Well, Miss Loomis, you made that bum loafer ashamed of himself for once! He's got out of Copper so quick as you don't know! What the sheriff never did, you did. You've drove Bud Wetherby out of town. I bet you he don't never come back. He'd be ashamed to show his face. The boys, they would never let up on laughin' at him—drove out of town by a lady—a little lady like you, too, not up to his shoulder! It was grand!"

Rheta's pretty little face darkened. It was not good news that Mr. Schwartz gave her—Bud, the resplendent, gone! Gone and unlikely to return! Gone and because of her! It was not thus that she wished to affect him.

As a matter of fact, it was not thus that she had affected him. Mr. Schwartz proved himself a poor prophet, for the next day, as Miss Loomis dusted the little mud jars and the big Indian baskets in the show window, a pinto pony trotted staidly along Copper's one thoroughfare, and on that pinto pony was seated—erect, graceful, and magnificent—Mr. Bud Wetherby. Mr. Wetherby's eyes were fixed eagerly upon the curio shop. When he saw Rheta and her duster behind the glass, he blushed a fine, fierce crimson, discernible even behind his tan; and he swept her a beautiful, grandiloquent bow, sombrero in hand.

Rheta acknowledged his greeting with a nod of her bright head, and dusted furiously, with an absorbed air, while he slowly brought the pony to a standstill in front of the Palace, lingeringly made him fast to a post, and very lingeringly disappeared within the hotel portals. Then her activity ceased; she stood staring out with unseeing eyes, her duster limp in her hand, a smile upon her lips, an undefined dream within her heart.

Bud's wooing of Miss Rheta Loomis was brief, and not at all tempestuous. That very week, he explained, as well as the knotted condition of his tongue would permit, that he was a rough party, that he was unworthy to tie the latches of her shoes, that he "had ought to be shot down" by a posse of his fellow citizens for daring to address her in such style—but that he loved her and wanted to marry her. With a stub of pencil and the back of an old envelope he tried to elucidate to her his worldly condition. He had such and such a claim, staked out in such and such a place; he worked it the required number of weeks a year; maybe it would amount to something some day. But, apart from that, he had a good deal saved up—his boss, old man Ferguson, was a straight white man, and he had cannily kept back some of Bud's wages whenever Bud had been bent on whooping it up in Copper. He had the beginnings of a tidy little herd of his own; and the old man had only the week before told him to get married and take a cabin there was up on the Buena Vista Ranch, only a mile or two from the main house. And—truly, he had never seen a woman, not a nice woman—not a good woman, that is—before, and if—and if—and if she could—

Then his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth, but his honest, shamed, fervent eyes spoke on for him. And



*"Excuse me, miss. I didn't know there was a lady present. I didn't go for to frighten you. I—I—"*

Rheta, still under the spell of the centaur of the other day, and rather impatient to see him again, instead of this humble, awkward, adoring youth, and quite convinced that the centaur would reappear as soon as she had accepted the deferential suitor, said, blushing and coquettish, that she could. Whereupon, the look of adoring humility deepened in Bud's eyes, and he told her solemnly:

"You ain't never goin' to have any cause to regret it, ladybird. I'm goin' to be *good* to you."

She thrilled a little at the solemnity of his tone, and she thrilled more at the awkward kiss he gave her. And she

thought, with happily beating pulses, that she never would regret it, and that life would be all a sweet palpitation, half due to her power over this great, lawless, wonderful creature, and half due to her surrender to him.

And so they were married, all Copper, with easy friendliness, assisting at the ceremony, the schoolmaster "standing up" with Bud, Mr. Schwartz giving Rheta away, and Copper's eight or ten young ladies all performing important, sisterly functions on the occasion. And Mr. Schwartz gave the happy couple a complete outfit of decorated china, of a pattern he had been unable to induce

any one in all southern New Mexico to buy. And then they rode, side by side, out along the dusty trail, across the broad, barren mesa, and toward the blue-peaked mountains.

## II.

From his empty cabin—empty, dusty, with the faint, unmistakable air of desertion upon it—Bud galloped straight to the big ranch house. He had been six weeks away from home. Rheta had not written during that time; she couldn't, of course, very well, for he had left no permanent address. He had communicated with the Old Man by telegram when necessity demanded—as, for instance, when it had seemed wiser to push on to Chicago with the steers than to stay at Kansas City and dispose of them. If there was anything wrong with Rheta— He wheeled up to the long, low house under the cottonwoods, gray with anxiety. Ma Ferguson sat in her capacious rocker on the veranda, shelling peas.

"All right, Bud!" she called reassuringly, before his dry lips could frame a question. "Didn't you stop in Copper? Rheta was callin' to meet you there." Ma Ferguson never forgot her Maine upbringing in certain matters of pronunciation.

"Left the train at Deming, an' rode out the north trail—to save a day," explained Bud. He felt suddenly weak after the reaction from his fright.

"It always makes trouble to try to surprise folks," observed Ma Ferguson, the peas making a rattling accompaniment to her conversation. "Never knew it to fail. Now, here's Rheta gone to Copper to meet you, an' you bent on hurryin' home to Rheta, an' so you both miss each other."

"How long has she been gone?" asked Bud.

Ma Ferguson appeared to reflect.

"'Bout five weeks. Yes, it'll be five weeks, come Thursday."

"Five weeks! Why, I ain't been gone but six!" Bud jerked the words out protestingly.

"Well, it seemed to Rheta like it was a good time for her to pay a little visit to Annie Trumen—you know Annie's been wantin' her ever since she was out here last summer. An' I don't know but it was as good a time as any. Why don't you turn your horse into the corral an' stay to supper? Pa'll want to see you. Better stay."

"Well—" agreed Bud doubtfully, and turned his pony's head toward the corral.

A year of marriage had changed him. All the old vigor that had been spent upon his sports and his roistering in equal measure with his work was spent now upon work. No longer did his voice wake the echoes of Copper City or Fiero when business called him to those centers of civilization; instead, he rode decorously in, put up his pony, transacted his affairs, and rode forth again "as sober as a jedge," as those communities themselves half regretfully noted. He spent as little time as possible away from the cabin on Old Man Ferguson's ranch; he saved thriftily; he looked ahead. Marriage had made a new man of him.

And it was not because Rheta had developed any unsuspected qualities as a man tamer. It was simply that Bud continued to see her with the eyes that had first beheld her crouched behind the counter in Schwartz's And So Forth Shop. He marveled daily at his supernal good fortune in winning her; he grew giddy at the thought of his daring in approaching her.

"You!" he used to say to himself. "You! The like of you! An' her—a moonbeam, an angel, a little fairy doll!" He was humble and dazed still at the realization of his happiness.

Until this time he had never been separated from his wife for more than three days since their marriage, and this

home-coming to an empty house dashed his spirits with gloom. However, the next day saw Sid, chief of the Old Man's teamsters, setting out for Copper for a load of supplies, and Rheta was to return with him.

Rheta returned, but Rheta with a difference. She had certain articulate discontents now, whereas hitherto she had had only unexpressed ones. Annie Trumen had a music box of some improved variety. Rheta was suddenly aware that she had missed her music dreadfully ever since she had left Kankakee.

"If that's all!" cried Bud joyfully, when he had discovered the cause of her gloom and listlessness.

And Sid's next trip to Copper—taken at Mr. Wetherby's expense—was for the purpose of carting home across the desert waste and up the foothills an upright piano imported from Omaha, a piano representing several of Mr. Wetherby's increasing herd. Whereat Rheta was grudgingly grateful.

The spring round-up took him from home for another period, but he left without misgivings. Rheta had her music; she would not be lonely. But, the round-up over, he returned to an empty cabin. The dust was thick upon the closed piano. The breakfast dishes, used early on the morning of his departure—the decorated dishes of Mr. Schwartz's benevolent bestowing—were still unwashed upon the table. Bud looked at them dully. Then he gathered them together, washed them, and put them away on the shelves he had hung for her so proudly when they had first come home to the cabin. He did not go immediately over to the big house; he had a premonition of Ma Ferguson's news. Rheta had gone to Copper to be less lonely during his absence!

"Well, by heck, it is lonely!" cried Bud aloud, thumping the table with his clenched fist. "It is lonely! I don't blame her—poor, pretty little ladybird!"

And again he bade himself think of the miracle that had won for him—rough, roistering dare-devil and fool—such a delicate piece of Heaven's handiwork as his Rheta.

He went himself to Copper after her that time, and when Mrs. Trumen told him that "the girls were jes' plum achin' for a good time, an' had gone to Deming" in pursuit of it, he said nothing harsh concerning either his wife or Mrs. Trumen's daughter, but went on to Deming after them.

"It's that Annie Trumen coaxes Rheta," he told himself. "She always was hell bent for fun. I'll have to tell Rheta not to be so thick with her."

He found the young ladies enjoying the enlivening influences of the railway station at the hour of the arrival of the Eastern Express. Half the little town was gathered together—Indian, Mexican, white. The Indian women with baubles to sell aboard the train stood waiting, their packs and baskets on their backs and arms. Some carried their papooses strapped across their shoulders, for the further delight of the tourists from the benighted East. It gave Bud a little feeling of relief that the two girls were alone, and were not accompanied by any of the masculine hangers-on.

"Not that Rheta would mean any harm by it, even if she was," he told himself sturdily. "But— Oh, well, it looks better this way. She's such a little angel she don't know the harm of lookin' wrong."

Rheta greeted him with a listlessness that had in it a touch of sullenness. Bud felt himself to blame for the faults she promptly found in the life "back home." After all, what right had a rough, brutal, lone-living creature like him to capture a fairy and to imprison her in his quarters?

The fairy thought that the quarters might be more bearable if they were furnished with a parlor suite of red





*And then they rode, side by side, out along the dusty trail, toward the blue-peaked mountains.*

plush such as she was able to show him in a shop window. The red plush was crated before nightfall, and it accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Wetherby and Miss Trumen on the very train that took them into Copper, whence it was later carted across the wilderness by the slow-moving team of Sid. Mrs. Wetherby, bored, languid, a little fretful, stayed at home with it and her piano for three months. Then, Bud

being off for a few days looking for strayed cattle, she "hot-footed it," as Ma Ferguson said, back to Copper.

"I don't see what she wants," Pa Ferguson meditated aloud. "I don't see what she wants. Here she makes an instant strike with Bud Wetherby, the straightest young feller that ever confined his deviltry to times an' places where deviltry was in order, an' that as strictly cut it out of his business

life. She makes a hit with him—she lands him, complete an' proper. She tames him so he don't do no deviltry anywheres any more. She puts blinders on him so he don't see there's such a thing as another petticoat in the world. He furnishes her up a house, stylish an' perfect. An' yet she ain't satisfied! Women is sure kittle cattle."

Whereupon, he prodded the tobacco deeply into his pipe and waited for his wife's reply. It was not forthcoming. He looked at her over his spectacles, which he had donned for the purpose of reading the weekly papers.

"Well, ma," he ventured after a few seconds, "ain't you got some sort of a theory?"

"Oh, yes, I got a theory all right," ma jerked out in reply. "But I'm goin' to tell it to Bud Wetherby myself."

"You don't think," insinuated the Old Man, with masculine relish for a titbit of gossip, "that she's after some other feller?"

Ma grunted angrily upon her lord and master, and he, correctly interpreting the grunt as a negative and an admonition combined, opened the paper and fell to reading the gossip of a larger world.

"You jest send Bud Wetherby in to see me," she commanded him, "when he comes back with those yearlings."

But Bud did not obey her summons. He knew what it portended—that Rheta had fled again, had sought in the pitiful little garishness of the frontier town the liveliness that she did not find at home, the happiness—he was obliged to think so—that he did not give her.

"A hellion like me—how could I have expected to keep her contented? Little ladybird!" That was what he said to himself as he looked about at his neglected house—piano, red plush, and all.

The sense of his unworthiness troubled him dully. Except for Ma Ferguson and the occasional girls who had visited her—and whom he had

shunned as if they had borne concealed about their attractive persons the germs of the plague—he had been unacquainted, throughout his young manhood, with "nice" women. He had regarded them as a race apart, both from the poor, tawdry daughters of pleasure with whom Copper had made him acquainted, and the good household drudges like Ma Ferguson. It was not for the like of him, awkward, uncomprehending of the needs of finer natures, to judge Rheta as he would judge a woman of one of the other sorts. Boundless condescension had been hers; somehow he had failed to deserve it. Somehow he had fallen short. He must strive to learn where. He must be more indulgent, must give ladybird more of what that delicate nature of hers craved.

He smoked furiously as he thought, as he tried, in a brain that was somewhat slow moving in the more complex matters of life, to determine in what way he could make himself what Rheta wanted, to perceive what would satisfy the cravings of her finer nature.

A rap on his door brought him out of his reverie. Ma Ferguson stood before him, knitting in hand, resolution on her broad, tough-skinned, kindly face, her horse hitched to a post before the cabin.

"When the mountain wouldn't come to Mahomet," she began easily, sitting down uninvited upon a fat, red plush chair, with arms like overdeveloped sausages, "Mahomet knew exactly what to do, an' went to the mountain. Here I am, Bud Wetherby."

"I'm real glad to see you, Mis' Ferguson," said Bud falsely, but hospitably. He stood up as he spoke, and shuffled embarrassedly on his big feet.

"Sit down, Bud! I'm goin' to stay quite a spell. I've got somethin' to say to you, an' I'm goin' to say it, no matter whether you like it or not. There's no manner of use for you to look sot

an' ugly about it. Pa'll tell you that when I make up my mind, I make it up! Rheta's gone again?"

Bud sat down sullenly, and made no answer to the supererogatory question of his caller. The deserted house fairly screamed the fact that Rheta was gone, that no woman had cared for it in days and days.

"Well," said ma briskly, "it's just as well if you don't answer. It'll save time. An' though I'm not pressed for time, you ought to be. You oughtn't to lose no time in gettin' after that wife of yours."

"Mis' Ferguson——" began Bud angrily.

"S-sh! Don't get riled an' het up over nothin'. I ain't said a word against Rheta. I'm sayin' a word against you—you ought to be after her. Mind you, I don't say she's doin' any harm——"

"Of course she ain't!" cried Bud loyally. "It's me that's wrong—she ought never to have married a great, rough roustabout like me. I ain't fit for her!" Ma looked at him with shrewd tenderness.

"Oh, I wouldn't worry none about fitness," she said dryly. "Men an' women is pretty much of a likeness when you come down to earth. But—you've been here on this ranch, man an' boy, Bud Wetherby, for seventeen years—ever since you was a little tike of nine, an' your poor, broken-hearted pa staggered into the house with you after he'd buried your ma up there near his wuthless claim. I ain't had any children of my own, Bud, an' it makes me as b'ilin' mad to see you make a fool of yourself as if you was a son of mine! I feel toward you like a mother. An' I could trounce you for lettin' that silly pate of a wife cast you down. Good Lord! Ain't you got any sense? Don't you see what kind of a female woman she is?"

"She's——" began Bud hotly.

"Oh, yes, of course she is! I admit

it. But she won't stay so long if you don't learn how to manage her. What did she leave that place where she worked for? Kankakee? She had folks there, even if they wasn't own folks—she had an aunt an' some cousins. But 'she got restless an'—bored, she calls it! Bored! Lord help us! If a woman's got a brain, or a heart, or even enough work to do, she don't have a chance to be bored nowhere on the earth's broad face. But your Rheta—she was 'bored'! She was lookin' for excitement. She thinks she can find it by tryin' a change of scene. So she hikes it out to Copper. An' she ~~was~~ so bored at the end of two days—oh, yes, she was; she's told me so, an' so has Old Man Schwartz—that she give him notice.

"Then along you comes, an' she thinks she sees what she wants—somethin' excitin', somethin' she can't manage, somethin' that'll keep her guessin'. Mind you, I don't say she reasoned it out to herself like that. I doubt me she's got the reasonin' power to do it," added ma, with frank contempt. "But that's how it is.

"An' you—your poor galoot!—you think an angel has fluttered down behind the counter of Schwartz's And So Forth Shop. An' you get married to her, an' act like a lost ewe lamb. Poor girl—she didn't think she was marryin' a mealy-mouthed, star-struck sheep! She thought she was marryin' a tornado, in the shape of a fine-lookin' young man. She's been deceived; she's disappointed. She's afflicted with that old complaint of hers—she's 'bored'! Well, if you've got any sense, Bud Wetherby, you'll unbore her. You'll show her that the tornado she married is still able to do a little tornadoin'. Try it!"

Whereupon, Ma Ferguson, looking very fierce and very kind, arose and nodded emphatically at the dazed and protesting Bud.



*With an outstretched arm he caught her.*

"That's all I got to say," she announced, "except that you'd better come on over to the house an' get Sing to give you somethin' to eat."

All Bud's spirit was in rebellion against the doctrine that his employer's wife, his second mother, the kind, rough guardian of his youth, had spoken. He knew that she was mistaken. He almost laughed at the blundering stupidity of her, at her utter lack of knowledge of the more delicate matters of the heart. Bud was quite sure that she had no delicacy of perception, because her

hair was rough and scant and gray, not fluffy gold, like Rheta's, and because her waist was thick and her skin weather-beaten.

Nevertheless, as he rode toward Copper after his runaway—somewhat slowly, for he was nonplused and knew not how to meet the situation, how to make his wife love her home, and love him enough to remain in it—Ma Ferguson's words kept dinning in his ears. In spite of loyalty to Rheta, in spite of the conviction that Ma Ferguson didn't know what she was talking about,

he remembered. Bored—bored in her old home, bored in her new; satisfied only in some excitement that she did not know how to achieve herself!

At Ernst's place, fifteen miles down the trail to Copper, Bud dismounted and went within. He was uproariously greeted—he had not stopped in Ernst's place since before his marriage. Until that sobering date, it had been the first spot where Bud, out on a rampage, used to begin operations. He was on no rampage to-day, to be sure; but he was dully puzzled, discouraged. He wanted a drink.

He had one; and Ma Ferguson's words began to lose their gloomy force. The liquor tingled through him; he was not so unhappy, after all. Rheta did not dislike her home, did not stint him of love; if she wanted to go to Copper for a little shopping, what more natural? Ma Ferguson, who had lived so many years on the ranch, didn't know the delights of shopping to civilized woman; she wasn't dainty in her tastes, fastidious as to her belongings and surroundings, like little ladybird! He understood ladybird—he would ride in and tell her so. He would tell her that she need never fear his misunderstanding the harmlessness of her excursions. Whereupon, he had another drink, and a warmer glow of understanding for Rheta flowed deliciously through his veins.

"He's considerable lit up," said Ernst, the specialist in "lighting up," as Bud, with a whoop, remounted his pony and set forth again toward Copper. "Five drinks wouldn't have done it once, but when a man gets out of practice, lets himself go——" He sighed over the results of such degenerate sobriety.

Meantime, Bud, with a new light glinting in his eyes and a gay smile on his face, rode on toward Frank's place, the second house of refreshment between Buena Vista and Copper. When he left Frank's place, he was singing,

and he made his horse give a little exhibition of bucking in front of the rough piazza.

"Feelin' pretty good," observed Frank, going in back of the bar again. "It's fine to see Bud like hisself again."

When Bud rode into Copper, liquor, the tonic air, the pounding exercise, had all conspired to make him noisy, forgetful, uproarious. At the edge of the little town—half adobe huts, half hideous, new red brick houses—he gave a circus performance with his pony.

"Just gettin' you in shape, Firefly," he observed to his steed, making him cavort wildly. "'S long time sinsh—sinsh——"

He forgot what he wished to say, but fortunately Firefly remembered what to do. In another instant they flew through the main street, a cloud of white dust, a whirlwind of noise, a streak of mottled pony, a mad centaur. People ran to the windows—cowboy antics were practically over in Copper lately; civilization had set its depressing seal upon the town.

"It's Bud Wetherby!" screamed Schwartz, running out into the road and hastily running in again to slam his door tight and to lock it.

"It's Bud Wetherby!" screamed the children coming out of school.

Two young women who were standing with their pretty noses glued tight to the window of Slumsky's Dress and Fashion Emporium, "Best Styles and Cheapest Prices West of Chicago," turned to look at the approaching avalanche. One grew pale.

"Oh, Rheta!" she cried. "It's your husband! Do you s'pose he's mad at you?"

Rheta grew pale also. She did not answer. Her breath came too uncertainly to be wasted upon words. Her eyes grew deep and dark with the look of fascinated terror.

The mounted maniac dashed past



them, turned abruptly at the end of the street, and was back, riding upon the strip of wood that Copper called its sidewalk. It seemed as if he would run the girls down. One of them fell, stumbling and screaming, into the store. The other still stood, unable to move, watching with fixed eyes the downbearing of her husband.

Just as he reached her—just as it seemed that he must run over her—he swerved half a foot to the right. With an outstretched arm he caught her, hauled her, brutally but skillfully, before him on the horse. Then again he turned the beast, drove spurs into him, and they were off, in a cloud of sun-smitten dust, beyond Copper.

"Ma Ferguson," pleaded Bud, who, by what he considered a lucky accident, had found that lady in the Palace Hotel at Copper the next day, "I'm afraid to see her. I treated her— Oh, Lord! An' she a refined woman, an angel— Oh, ma! I left her asleep—I don't dare to see her when she wakes up. I was drunk—drunk! An' I laid hands on her like I was some wild Indian an' she— Oh, ma!" There were tears in Bud's eyes, hopeless tears.

"Has she said anything intimatin' like that she was—put out—with you?" inquired ma.

"I don't remember," confessed Bud. "I—I don't seem to remember sayin' much of anythin', or that she said anythin'. I galloped her on Firefly clear out to Concos Pass an' back—like she was a bale of goods. An' then I carried her upstairs here like she was a baby. I've disgraced her an' myself. I ain't fit—"

"Well, before you do much snivelin' in front of her, find out how she feels toward you." Ma tried to speak with conviction, but her voice faltered a little. She had not intended her advice to be taken so violently as Bud seemed to

have taken it. "A woman like that has got to be mastered—it's what she wants. Mind, I don't say it was necessary for you to go actin' like a drunken cowboy to master her; an' I don't say that all women want to be mastered," she added grimly. "But if ever a woman did, that woman's Rheta Wetherby. An' I'd give her to understand that I meant to do it, if I was you. Don't you go apologizin' around. Tell her it'll be worse than that the next time."

Bud thought ill, very ill, of the advice. Abjectly he returned to the room to which he had carried his wife in his guise of a conquering vandal the night before. Rheta was awake. She was up and seated before a golden-oak dressing table, doing her hair. She looked around as he entered. He feared to meet her irate gaze. But finally he did so; he would bear his doom; he would accept whatever sentence of banishment she imposed.

"Rheta—ladybird—" he began hoarsely. And then he saw that she was blushing, that her eyes were shining, that her lips were dewy with invitation, her bosom heaving with tremulous excitement beneath her linen and laces.

"Rheta!" he cried, in a new tone—the tone of the conqueror. He walked across the room and gathered her, unbound golden locks and all, into a bear-like embrace.

She nestled contentedly in the hollow of his shoulder. The man she had married had reappeared; he would always reappear, now in this powerful rôle, now in that! Her shining eyes looked down a future always palpitant with the uncertainty of her glorious mate, always blissful with the knowledge that he was master.

Bud, across the golden head, looked amazedly out of the window. He envisioned Ma Ferguson suddenly enthroned in the seat of wisdom, and he saluted her.



## With Caesar's Assistance

By Marion Short

Author of "The Famous Cochran Children," "The Picture of a Poetess," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY R. EMMETT OWEN

**B**EFORE the Saturday-night crowd at the Mills Brothers Circus had left the Wisconola Hippodrome, builders began erecting the gigantic band stand for the concerts that were to follow.

On Sunday morning, while there was yet barely room on the uncompleted platform for his orchestra to assemble, Paul Sevigne, the nervous, dominant director, rapped his baton for the rehearsal to begin.

The "Anvil Chorus" was the opening number, and it received various additional effects from the din of hammer, chisel, and saw; and ever and anon Caesar, a large, glossy bull, penned in a circular barricade of boxes, barrels, and ladders in what had been the main

ring of the circus, added to the racket by smiting the floor with his hoof and bellowing a sonorous note or two.

Cæsar had been appearing nightly in an innocuous imitation of a bullfight, and, with a few other circus appurtenances, was waiting to be removed.

A slender wisp of a girl in a simple white gown sat on a nail keg near the steps that led to the platform. She was insignificant in appearance save for a pair of large, radiant blue eyes and the thick masses of silky black hair that framed her oval face. She was Miss Felice Lyndhall, to be engaged as alternate soprano with Frau Wagenhalls if she proved her mettle at rehearsal.

Sevigne, while directing his orches-

tra, sent several sharp and critical glances in her direction. Unaware of his scrutiny, she was watching the antics of a pretty, fair-haired little girl who was dancing about Cæsar's pen and amusing herself by pelting him with bits of hard candy. The little girl was Director Sevigne's much-petted and only child.

In a pause of the rehearsal, Sevigne beckoned to Carl Saunders, the manager of the Wisconola Musical Bureau, and that individual immediately left the reporter with whom he had been talking and came forward to find out what was wanted.

"You've been boosting your little prima donna over there to the press, I suppose?" Sevigne's expression was unpleasant as he put the question.

"Why, yes," admitted Saunders genially. "I thought it might help advertise the concerts a bit. 'Unknown but talented singer,' and all that sort of thing. Any objections?"

"Only that I'd advise you to save your ammunition for bigger game."

"What?" Saunders lifted his sandy eyebrows in surprise. "Has some one said Miss Lyndhall won't make good?"

"No. I'm judging for myself. How can such a midget as that expect to make herself heard in this barn of a place? Why, she's hardly bigger than my little girl yonder!"

"Voice isn't a matter of beef, it's a matter of throat," protested Saunders, though plainly made uneasy by Sevigne's remarks.

"All the same," snapped the director, "it takes a woman with a chest like Frau Wagenhalls' to be heard above my orchestra through these miles of space. You're not so wise about singers, Saunders, as you think you are, even if your business is booking musical people. I don't like to waste my time giving try-outs to such unpromising material. What made you select her, any-

how? You've never heard her sing, you tell me."

Saunders removed his hat and scratched a perspiring bald head.

"Well, in the first place, she's a Wisconola girl——"

Sevigne snapped his fingers.

"What does that amount to with the public? Can she sing? That's all that concerns them."

"In the next place, she brought back wonderful press notices from Italy. She took the rôle of *Marguerite* in the opera house in Florence while she was still a student, and——"

"A little opera house in Italy," interrupted Sevigne skeptically, "is not the Wisconola Hippodrome. It's a very different proposition all round. How about that Australian contralto you have on your books?"

"I know she has a big voice, for I've heard it," stated Saunders, with emphasis, "and I'll have her here in an hour if Miss Lyndhall won't do." He leaned forward and spoke rather apologetically. "I feel sorry for her, Mr. Sevigne. Perhaps that's why I made up my mind to give her the first chance as alternate with the Wagenhalls woman."

"Sorry for her? Why?"

"She's studied abroad for years and spent a small fortune preparing herself for a career here at home. When she got back to Wisconola, she found her father dangerously ill and knew for the first time that he had failed in business soon after sending her to Italy, but had struggled on and managed to send her all the money she needed just the same. It's up to her now to support them both, and she hasn't a penny to help her make a start. That's why this engagement is almost a matter of life and death to her. She begged me with tears in her eyes just to induce you to give her a hearing."

"I'll do that in a few minutes now," said Sevigne, softening just a trifle, "but frankly I'm afraid of the result."

He took up his baton again and turned toward his men. A piece of candy struck him on the cheek, and he heard the shrill laughter of Nina, his little girl. She had a small, elfish face clouded about by wonderful masses of blond hair. Sevigne shook the baton at her threateningly, but his look was one of proud parental affection.

As the rather disgruntled Saunders came toward Miss Lyndhall, she favored him with her prettiest and most appealing smile. Somehow she had sensed the fact that the colloquy between Sevigne and Saunders had concerned itself with her, and it filled her with a vague uneasiness.

"Hang it all!" quoth Saunders to himself. "She's a fine, sensible sort of girl, but she is a midget. Sevigne was right, she is!"

Thrusting his thumbs in his armpits, he teetered back and forth nervously as he addressed her. His moonlike face was clouded, and evasively he fixed his eyes on the arched roof of the hippodrome.

"Your solo is—er—what sort of a solo, eh?"

She answered brightly:

"Quite an ambitious one—the aria from 'The Queen of Sheba.'"

"Don't know it. Fireworks sort of a thing?"

"Yes." She smiled, showing a row of firm little teeth. "It takes in all the vocal gymnastics. Why? Would Mr. Sevigne prefer to have me choose something else?"

"Oh, no, it isn't that so much," blurted Saunders, growing red, "as it is that he's afraid—that is—he—thinks this big hall may overweight you a bit. See?"

The sensitive muscles of Miss Lyndhall's throat contracted nervously, but she managed to retain her courageous smile.

"He's mistaken, Mr. Saunders, but he's not the first one who has imagined

my voice must be small because I am so tiny myself. He seemed to think my size was against me, did he not?"

"Yes," admitted Saunders, "that's just it. And since I hadn't heard you myself, I couldn't say much one way or the other."

"You could have told him about my press notices, couldn't you?"

"He wasn't in the mood for listening. But of course I hope I didn't make a mistake in recommending you."

Sevigne's voice, bland and carefully modulated, at that moment reached them from the platform:

"In five minutes, Miss Lyndhall, I shall be ready for your aria." He bowed jerkily, sending his amber hair in a disordered fringe over his forehead.

She looked steadily at him with her luminous eyes, her chin held high.

"In five minutes, Mr. Sevigne, I shall be ready to sing."

She started for the dressing room to get her music.

"I say," Saunders cautioned, catching up with her, "sing out at the top of your lungs—put on the pressure, even if you overdo it a little. The hint is friendly, you understand?"

"Yes, thank you, Mr. Saunders, I understand."

Under the shouted directions of an irritable boss, the clamor of the carpenters increased. Their work had not progressed as rapidly as expected. To augment the confusion, a fierce quarrel arose between the hippodrome guards and the circus employees over the belated removal of Caesar. Benches were stacked up near the animal to be placed in orderly rows as soon as the desired space was empty.

When Miss Lyndhall emerged from her dressing room, Saunders was waiting to accompany her to the side of the platform.

"Sing out—overdo it!" he repeated warningly. "Don't forget!"

At last she stood in the appointed place, her eyes fastened upon her music. Striving to ignore the dissonance of busy tools and shouting voices, she listened, alert to her finger tips, for the introductory swell of strings and brass from the orchestra behind her. A bright red scarf, which she had thrown about her shoulders to protect her from the draft, picked out her figure sharply against a wide-spreading background of black coats.

Her opening notes were sweet and clear, but rather small in volume. Instinctively the diminutive soprano was gauging space. Just as she prepared to "sing out," as Saunders had advised, Caesar, raising his head, sent forth a series of bellows compared to which his previous efforts became mere murmurs. At the same time the general din increased as if at a given signal. After all, Miss Lyndhall reflected de-

spairingly, what could one silver thread of a voice, however powerful, avail in conflict with all this hubbub? In the midst of a difficult run she stopped short. Instantly Sevigne quieted his musicians and waited for her to speak.

"It is impossible," she explained, turning to him with a hopeless little shrug of her shoulders, "to proceed under such conditions. When it is quieter, I'll try again, if I may. They



*Caesar headed straight in the direction taken by the fleeing child. pulse of terror, flitting the red scarf*



are unjust to us both—these conditions!"

"That's very true," Sevigne agreed politely, but with an insincere glibness that chilled her to the heart. "If you'll kindly wait over in your dressing room, Miss Lyndhall, I'll send Mr. Saunders there to speak with you."

He left her abruptly, and threaded his way through the ranks of his musicians back to where Saunders was sitting.

"Just as I told you, Saunders—she won't do. She can't be heard a dozen rows from the stage. Of course, she was handicapped some by the infernal uproar in this place, but, handicap or no handicap, she hasn't the voice."

"That's final, is it?" asked Saunders, very meekly.

"Yes, final. Just let her out as quickly as you can, and have your Australian contralto on hand for afternoon rehearsal. Madam Wagenhalls must



P. Emmett Owen

Miss Lyndhall, almost in his path, threw out her arms in an almost in the face of the brute.



*Felice Lyndhall sang again, gloriously, triumphantly.*

positively have an alternate singer after to-morrow night, so we can't lose any time."

"Soon as I finish my cigar," said the flustered agent, uncrossing his legs and spilling ashes over his portly vest front, "I'll go and break the news to her. Frankly, though, I don't like the job."

"You can see for yourself that she doesn't fill the bill, can't you?"

"Oh, yes, of course I can see that!"

Miss Lyndhall, forlornly descending the steps of the platform, did not start for her dressing room as requested. Half stunned by disappointment, she started to walk in quite the opposite direction. She knew that in Sevigne's opinion she had failed, failed miserably, and that he would not consent to give

her a second opportunity to prove her merit. How could she break the crushing news to her father, who had smiled so confidently as she left his sick bed?

"It's the big chance we've been waiting for," he had said, "and you'll win out, dearie. There's nothing like making the right start. That's why I've hung on to life the way I have, little girl, just to see you make the right start."

A terrific crash recalled her to a sense of her surroundings, and she stopped, aghast. Cæsar had lurched against his barricade, just as she approached it, and it had fallen to earth in a cloud of dust. A childish shriek smote upon her ear, and she saw Sevigne's little girl running frantically

past her. Then, a few feet distant, she beheld the big bull plunging to free himself from a rope tangled about his feet. An attendant collided with him and was flung, sprawling. Freed from the rope and unmolested, Caesar headed straight in the direction taken by the fleeing child. Miss Lyndhall, almost in his path, threw out her arms in an impulse of terror, flinging the red scarf almost in the face of the brute. Caesar saw it and stopped, then turned and started madly toward the offending bit of drapery. Frantically Miss Lyndhall flung out her arms again and dodged the charging animal, once, twice, thrice, this way and that! Then, just as she realized that the pile of benches shut off a further attempt at escape, a lasso caught the mammoth creature about his neck and brought him to his knees.

In a few moments a crowd of men surrounded her, as, pale and limp, she clung for support to the back of a bench. She was bewildered when she saw Sevigne coming toward her with tears in his eyes and holding out his hand.

"I thank you, Miss Lyndhall," he said, in a voice shaken with emotion. "You saved my little girl from danger at the risk of your own life!"

"Saved her—how?" the singer gasped, not understanding.

"By diverting the beast's attention, of course, with that red scarf!" chipped in Saunders excitedly. "They always go for red! By Jove, but you were plucky!"

Miss Lyndhall looked down dazedly at the bit of red crape still tightly clutched in one hand. Up to that moment she had been entirely unconscious of the fact that she had either held it or made use of it in her encounter with Caesar.

"Headlines for you in to-morrow's paper," commented the reporter, scribbling rapidly. "They'd elect you for a female matador if they had you in Spain."

"Nina," said Sevigne, stooping down to kiss the little girl, who stood clinging to his knees, "ask Miss Lyndhall what your dad can ever do to repay her for her heroic act?"

At that the color came flooding back to the singer's pale cheeks and hope to her fainting heart. Her act, as she had been on the point of proclaiming, had not been one of heroism, but of pure feminine fright and stupidity instead—her deft manipulation of the red crape scarf had been entirely accidental. But, she reflected, if she had saved Sevigne's child from possible harm even by a stupid chance, surely she might claim a reward that might mean life itself to one who was very dear to her.

"Let me rehearse with your orchestra again—now—Mr. Sevigne; that's all I ask. I didn't rise to my opportunity before, but I'm quite sure I can do so if given a second chance. Will you give me that chance?"

"With all my heart," said Sevigne.

With the rampant Caesar removed from sight and hearing, and even the carpenters stilled into temporary silence by their interest in the outcome of the trial, Felice Lyndhall sang again, gloriously, triumphantly. Concluding, she turned to face a wildly applauding orchestra, while the enthusiastic and astounded Sevigne even flung away his baton to take her by the hands.

"I told you she was all right," said Saunders boastfully, at the close of the rehearsal, lighting another fat cigar. "I guess you'll admit after this that I'm a bit wise about singers, after all!"



# Is the Cultivation of Beauty Worth While?

By Doctor Lillian Whitney

Dr. Whitney is always glad to answer all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health, but she cannot undertake to answer letters which fail to inclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for reply, or to letters inclosing Canadian stamps. Every week she receives many letters of this sort, in spite of the notice always printed at the end of this department. Sometimes even, the post office sends notification that letters are being held for her, which careless writers have posted with no stamp. If you have failed to receive a reply to your letter, you may know that it is for one of these three reasons.—EDITORS.

BEAUTY in woman has ever subjugated man, and for this reason it has been a matter of wonderment to onlookers upon the suffrage movement that the women prominently identified with the "cause" have given so little consideration to this momentous fact. At last some among them have awakened to a realization of the value and the power of mere physical beauty; not sensuous beauty, but calm, austere, proportional beauty that breaks down rude and brutal opposition and inspires man with a sense of the true and the good. The women of New York are planning a campaign of beauty with which to lure men into recognizing their rights as distinct human entities. Argument has heretofore failed; but what man can retain his callous attitude when confronted with the beautiful in womanhood as represented by Luis Mora's triumphant figure, or the exquisite painting "Motherhood" donated to the "cause" by the distinguished artist, John W. Alexander? Ah, who indeed?

The appellate division of the Supreme Court of the State of New Jersey, presided over by five grave judges, was recently called upon to decide the right of a woman to be beautiful. They

did so to the extent of a neat little fortune as a slight compensation to her for its loss. The suit of another woman on similar grounds looked unfavorable until she thought of presenting to the jury a photograph of herself taken before the accident that had marred her attractions. The case was thereupon hastily settled out of court.

Daniel Frohman, the well-known dramatic producer, expresses himself very clearly upon the value of beauty. This is what he says:

"A man can have any kind of a face and succeed, but a woman must have a perfect face, or, at least, one that is not scarred or maimed.

"As far as the value of beauty is concerned, while it is a valuable asset for the actress, I would not call it altogether essential to her success; but I do believe that woman's business is to be beautiful, and by this I do not mean on the stage alone, but everywhere. Physical beauty goes a long way toward the success of any woman. On the stage, of course, ability must be coupled with beauty to make her success complete. That is why I insist that it is such a valuable adjunct."

Heretofore we have considered the cultivation of beauty worth while in







our flowers and plants, in our horses and dogs, in our fruits and vegetables, and in our live stock. The ancient Greeks thought it worth while in their men and women, and we are beginning to think so, too.

It is not necessary here to enter into the care, study, and scientific investigation that have been expended upon the breeding of perfect species in the vegetative and animal worlds. The art of cultivating human beauty passed out with ancient Greece, but has lately received a world-wide impetus. We cannot say just how and where it started, but we can be certain that it has its roots in many sources, all of which are tending to one end, i. e., the physical improvement of the races.

Our little world is moving along very swiftly in these days. We have lost our leisurely pace, and what would have been considered bizarre a few years ago now seems but the natural sequence of events. So when we are told of a beautiful man, quite the most beautiful in the world, establishing a Greek colony in the Adirondacks for the cultivation of beauty, harmony, strength, purity, and efficiency, we hear it with extreme satisfaction and with a fervent hope that it will succeed, since it will

tend toward the improvement and betterment of the race.

There is no doubt that of all the world's people those of ancient Greece attained the highest state of mental and physical beauty. It is usual to connect only physical perfection with them, but their mental ability was—and of

course obviously so—upon an equally high plane, because they were so wonderfully trained physically that they attained remarkable poise and balance. They were able to perform quite extraordinary feats of bodily movements, expressing a control over the muscular and nervous systems that resulted in an exquisite equilibrium, as shown by their incomparable sculpture, which has never been even remotely reached by any people the world has known since then.

The eyes of the world have recently been turned to ancient Greece. So



Ready for her daily beauty bath.

thoroughly have we awakened to a realization of our physical shortcomings, so deeply do we deplore our lack of physical development, *with its inevitable lack of mental efficiency*, that we are casting longing eyes at the secrets whereby the Greeks attained their perfection of form, action, movement. Students are now working out the methods employed by these incompar-

ably beautiful people, and it is very likely that we will soon be able to understand and follow them.

While the Greeks abhorred a physical defect, their ideal of personal beauty appears *cold* to us because of its very perfection of outline. We of to-day are not the children of a pure race, but of a commingling of many, and consequently we have developed a tremendous variety of flowers, as it were, each of which makes its appeal. That is what, in the estimation of moderns, the Greeks lacked—an appealing loveliness. But they represent strength and vigor in addition to good health, which, of course, lays the foundation of beauty. What the world is now beginning to strive for is *strength and vigor with good health*; beauty must follow.

Of course this embraces many things. Even the country lout, who has absolutely no sense of the beautiful in God's out-of-doors and of whom it might be said:

A primrose by the river's brim  
A yellow primrose is to him,  
And it is nothing more,

represents beauty to an eye that can divine it, in his freedom from all artificialities and conventions, in his bronzed vigor, and in his simple and natural tastes. He would not appeal to an æsthetically reared maiden, yet he assuredly represents a type of undoubted value.

Whatever makes for health makes for beauty. *Personal hygiene* is, therefore, the most important factor in life, since it is the foundation of health; and we may go farther and state that beauty becomes a matter of *personal cultivation*.

The Greeks lived almost entirely out of doors. Their houses were built around an inner court or open-air space; their amphitheaters and all other buildings where people congregated were built in the open; their pleasures, activities, and entire business of life,

in fact, were conducted in the air, as it were. In the pursuance of health, hygienists are teaching the value of fresh air; it now forms one of our most valuable agents in combating disease. It is all so simple and so natural. When we examine the elements that compose the body, we find that three-fourths are either watery or gaseous. The lungs, if of normal size, use up large quantities of air daily. Pure air and water are the most essential things, then, in building up the "body beautiful."

The Greeks proved that great energy of mind and body is in direct proportion to the capacity for deep and profound breathing. Those who have a good breathing apparatus are found to be more talented, energetic, aspiring, hopeful, animated, vivacious, spirited, and inspiring than those of feeble respiratory power.

Life in the open is devotedly to be sought, and one should especially cultivate the capacity for inhaling deeply, thus mingling fresh air with the fluids of the body and purifying the blood, upon which color and clearness of the tissues are dependent.

It cannot be overemphasized that a bright, fresh color and clearness of the skin and eyes are derived mainly from the action of the air in the lungs, and that these natural beauties are most commonly observed in people with good lung capacity who spend considerable time out of doors; which accounts for the fact that men have better natural complexions than women. No beauty of form or regularity of feature can compensate for the absence of healthy color, or redeem a skin pimpled and blotched.

A woman possessed of a brilliant complexion has always a purity of blood and a vigor of thought and movement that pallid and colorless persons lack. A fine complexion, with good color of the hair and eyes, constitutes

the *chief* beauty of the human race, for so much more is *involved* and included in this than in any other single trait. It spells health. A good complexion is not made or preserved by veils and cosmetics. A good color, like religion, comes from within. A wholesome diet, with plenty of outdoor exercise—such as gardening, walking, rowing, bathing, swimming, and skating—will do more toward creating and preserving a good complexion than all the veils and cosmetics in the world. The color of the face reveals the permanent as well as the temporary condition of the body, and that explains why we are excited to admiration and envy by the beautiful *glow* of health. The cultivation of this is assuredly tremendously worth while.

Those who have a feeble respiratory apparatus can greatly improve themselves by practicing deep-breathing exercises in the open air or at an open window. Simply inhaling deep drafts of air will at first be sufficient, as the lungs must be got into the habit of breathing with their entire capacity. Persons whose breathing is shallow are not benefited by exercise; indeed, their efforts at exercise are but superficial, since the heart and lungs act together and what increases the speed of one influences the other. Deep, purposeful breathing accelerates the circulation of the entire body, carrying more blood freely charged with oxygen to all the tissues.

In cases of feeble heart and lung action, anæmia, and allied conditions, great benefit may be derived from the administration of a remarkable product invented by a German scientist, consisting of pure foodstuffs with vegetable iron. This preparation requires no digestion, but is immediately taken up by the blood and assimilated. Further information upon it is available to all readers, as are also directions for simple breathing exercises.



Lift the body upon the toes; inhale deeply, tense the throat muscles and exhale. This exercise should be done in the open air.

Next in importance in the cultivation of beauty is cleanliness. Many rank it first, but they are wrong. Cleanliness is *next* to godliness, and God's out of doors, *fresh air*, ranks first. But we may compromise and say that cleanliness is of equal importance.

In the prevention of disease and in the preservation of a fine skin and healthy color, bathing is necessary.

The skin is a vast organ containing millions of glands whose tiny external openings we call "pores"; from it exudes a great deal of waste matter, as much as thirty ounces in the course of a day, which is twice the amount breathed out through the lungs.

To keep this organ up to a high state of efficiency, extreme cleanliness is necessary. Less work is thereby thrown upon the lungs and kidneys. When the pores are clogged with perspiration, dust, germs, and so forth, the tiny glands lose their power to throw out of the body the normal amount of waste or poisonous matter, which thus continues to circulate in the blood. The kidneys then try to get rid of it, and are weakened by the extra work they have to do. In addition to all this, the skin loses its beauty.

Human skin is one of the marvels of nature; there is nothing more exquisite than a fine, healthy, tinted skin, which possesses a fragrance so refined and delicate that it outrivals any perfume ever manufactured by man.

The daily bath for cleanliness is imperative. The Greeks and Romans rubbed themselves with scented pomades and waters to enhance further the softness, whiteness, and delicacy of the skin; in fact, the after treatment was part of the bath. For this purpose there is perhaps nothing more efficacious than Hungary water, named for the famous Queen Elizabeth of Hungary, who is said to have owed her marvelous beauty to it, and the secret of which was not discovered until after her death. This queen at seventy was still so attractive that she inspired a youth of eighteen with a burning passion.

#### THE FORMULA OF HUNGARY WATER.

Rosemary .....	12 ounces
Lemon peel .....	1 ounce
Orange peel .....	1 ounce
Mint .....	1 ounce
Balm .....	1 ounce
Rose water .....	1 pint
Spirit of wine .....	1 quart

A water that is specially recommended for the preservation and restoration—and the cultivation, too—of a beautiful skin contains an ounce each of mint, sage, rosemary, lavender, mixed spices, and camphor, one quart of strong white vinegar, and one pint of alcohol.

The herbs are soaked for two weeks in the vinegar, and the camphor in the alcohol. After straining, they are mixed, and a wineglass each of myrrh and benzoin added. This delightful preparation may be rubbed into the skin with a soft brush until it is dry, or a small amount can be added to pure water and the body bathed with it, allowing it to dry in.

It must not be forgotten that while beauty of the body is a valuable asset to man or woman, its charms, like that of a beautiful picture, are enhanced when becomingly framed.

In Lady Holland's "Memoirs," she quotes Sidney Smith to this effect:

"Never teach false modesty. How exquisitely absurd to tell girls that beauty is of no value, dress is of no use; her whole prospects and happiness in life may often depend upon a new gown or a becoming bonnet, and if she has five grains of sense, she will find this out."

NOTE: Doctor Whitney's "Rules for Health and Aids for Beauty" will gladly be furnished those interested in these vital matters.

Doctor Whitney will be glad to answer, free of charge, all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health. Private replies will be sent to those inclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Do not send Canadian stamps or coins. Address: Beauty Department, SMITH'S MAGAZINE, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York.



# THIN FOR YEARS

## "Gains 22 Pounds in 23 Days"



"I was all run down to the very bottom," writes F. Gagnon. "I had to quit work I was so weak. Now, thanks to Sargol, I look like a new man. I gained 22 pounds in 23 days."

"Sargol has put just 10 pounds on me in 14 days," states W. D. Roberts. "It has made me sleep well, enjoy what I ate and enabled me to work with interest and pleasure."

"I weighed 132 pounds when I commenced taking Sargol. After taking 20 days I weighed 144 pounds. Sargol is the most wonderful preparation for flesh building I have ever seen," declares D. Martin, and J. Meier adds: "For the past twenty years I have taken medicine every day for indigestion and got thinner every year. I took Sargol for forty days and feel better than I have felt in twenty years. My weight has increased from 150 to 170 pounds."

When hundreds of men and women—and there are hundreds, with more coming every day—living in every nook and corner of this broad land voluntarily testify to weight increases ranging all the way from 10 to 35 pounds given them by Sargol, you must admit, Mr. and Mrs. and Miss Thin Reader, that there must be something in this Sargol method of flesh building after all.

Hadn't you better look into it, just as thousands of others have done? Many thin folks say: "I'd give most anything to put on a little extra weight," but when someone suggests a way they exclaim, "Not a chance. Nothing will make me plump. I'm built to stay thin." Until you have tried Sargol, you do not and cannot know that this is true.

Sargol has put pounds of healthy "stay there" flesh on hundreds who doubted and in spite of their doubts. You don't have to believe in Sargol to grow plump from its use. You just take it and watch weight pile up, hollows vanish and your figure round out to pleasing and normal proportions. You weigh yourself when you begin and again when you finish and you let the scales tell the story.

Sargol is absolutely harmless. It is a tiny concentrated tablet. You take one with every meal. It mixes with the food you eat for the purpose of separating all of its flesh producing ingredients. It prepares these fat making elements in an easily assimilated form, which the blood can readily absorb and carry all over your body. Plump, well-developed persons don't need Sargol to produce this result. Their assimilative machinery performs its functions without aid. But thin folks' assimilative organs do not. This fatty portion of their food now goes to waste through their bodies like unburned coal through an open grate. A few days' test of Sargol in your case will surely prove whether or not this is true of you. Isn't it worth trying?

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To enable any thin reader, 10 pounds or more under weight to easily make this test, we will give a 50c box of Sargol absolutely free. Either Sargol will increase your weight or it won't and the only way to know is to try it. Send for this Free Test Package today, enclosing 10c in silver or stamps to help pay postage, packing, etc., and a full size 50c package will be sent by return mail free of charge.

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**DIARY** January 22, 1820

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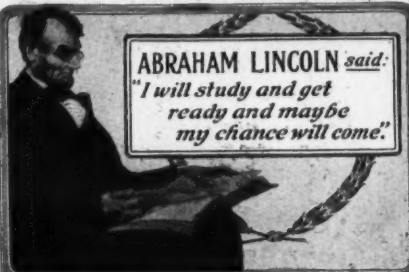
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